

# commonweal

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EURONEGOIATIONS  
FRANK SHEED, R.I.P.

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DECEMBER 4, 1981

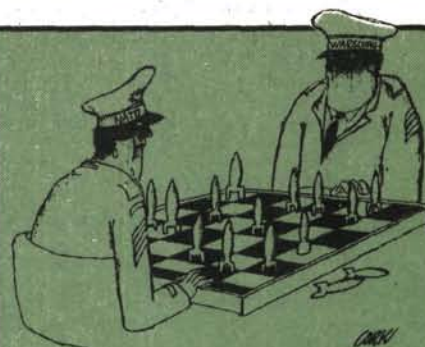


## WHAT THE POLES HAVE DONE

MIECZYSLAW  
MANELI

Alasdair MacIntyre  
Josephine Jacobsen  
John Murray Cuddihy  
Walter F. Murphy  
Kenneth L. Woodward  
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## BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS



Thomas Powers  
HOW ACCURATE IS  
ACCURATE?

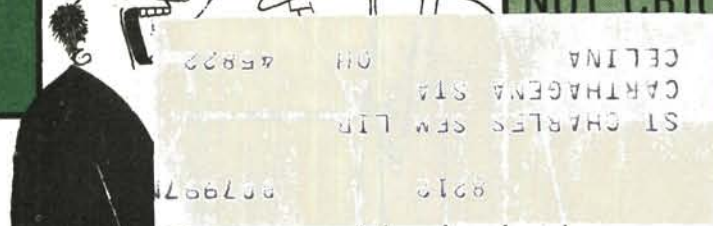
Roger M. Williams  
CLOUDS OVER  
ATLANTA

Jerry Voorhis  
VOICE OF THE POOR

Eric R. Terzuolo  
THE WRITE-WING

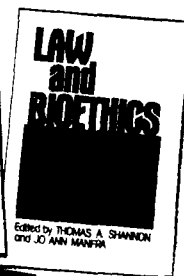
John Garvey  
TURNING PEOPLE  
AWAY

Colin L. Westerbeck  
NOT CRICKET



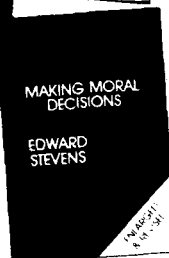
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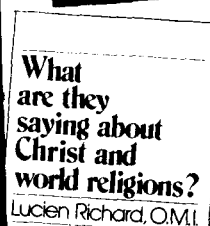
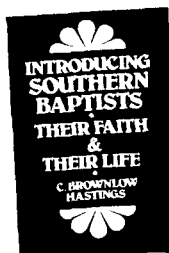
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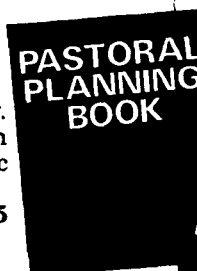
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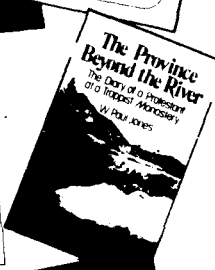
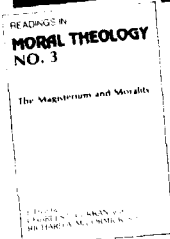
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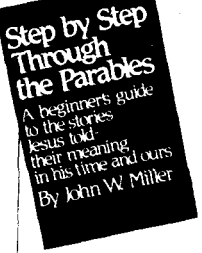
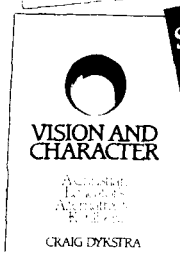


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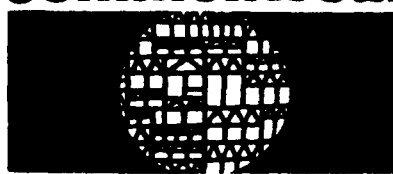
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# commonweal



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## FROM EUROMISSILES TO EURONEGOTIATIONS

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**O**N HIS DEATHBED Hegel is reported to have said, "Only one man ever understood me, and he didn't." That is about the way we feel when following the debates over medium-range theater nuclear weapons in Europe. Every once in a while, it seems as though someone actually understands the issue—and then it doesn't. The controversial deployment of Pershing II missiles and of intermediate-range cruise missiles promised by NATO has its roots in a 1977 warning by Helmut Schmidt against European overreliance on the U.S. deterrent. And yet U.S. military think-tankers had largely prompted Schmidt into action—and it is Schmidt today who is taking a political beating because of NATO's American-led decision. To read the strategic analysts on this whole imbroglio is to discover, again and again, how much more heavily political factors, rather than strictly military ones, weighed in the NATO choice. *Something* had to be done to counter the Soviet deployment of SS-20s and Backfire bombers; to respond to Moscow's attack on Afghanistan; to provide visible commitment to Western Europe (hence the land-based missiles rather than sea- or air-based alternatives); to provide a "missing link" of weapons that would couple NATO's battlefield forces with U.S. strategic capacities. Exactly how the new NATO missiles were to function militarily—what they were to target, and why—was never very clear. And ironically the political dimension has become the decisively counter-productive one. Instead of leading to NATO strength, the Western missile deployment seems to be a prime source of NATO disarray. At the same time, the necessity of "coupling" current NATO arms and strategy with the U.S. strategic forces by means of this new intermediate level of missiles has not only been roundly questioned by a number of very tough-minded military analysts. It is even put into doubt by President Reagan's own negotiating proposal, which, if the Soviets were to accept the president's "zero option," would leave NATO still without this supposedly essential level of weaponry.

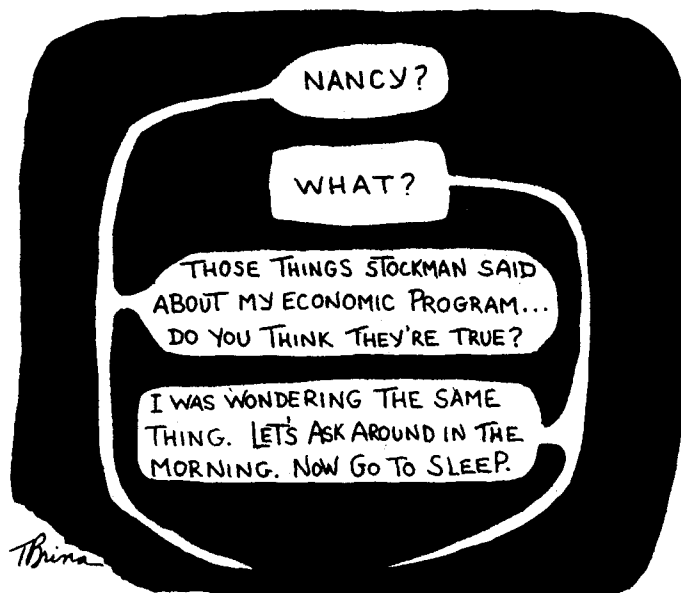
Of course, we doubt whether most of the demonstrators in the streets of Bonn, Amsterdam, Paris, London, Berlin understand this any better than we do. They are not reacting to the finer points of deterrence theory but to a political message that the Reagan administration has been delivering, namely that nothing else counts for much in international relations except getting tough with the Russians. The Soviet Union has been discredited as never before in Western Europe. Solzhenitsyn and the Gulag, Afghanistan, and Poland took care of that. But up to now the Reagan administration has seemed determined to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory: identifying itself with counterrevolutionary terror in Central America, casting every conflict in East-West terms, talking (and selling) armaments at every opportunity, acting as though Europe needed only a good show of "firmness" (we'll make those neutron warheads—slap!—whether you like it or not) to fall meekly into line.

That is why President Reagan's November 18 address on arms control was so

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welcome. We take it for granted that this was only an opening move in a complicated chess game. The president's description of the arms imbalance in Europe is open to question; so is the Soviet counter-description. But the important part of the president's message was what went unsaid. There was no hint of the earlier doctrine of "linkage" that tied progress on arms negotiations to Soviet good behavior everywhere on the globe. This doesn't mean that East-West bargaining can be isolated totally from the overall climate of conflict or coexistence; that would be illusory. It does mean, by implication, that the administration now recognizes that both East and West may have solid grounds of self-interest for reaching and respecting agreements on arms even while the two superpowers, with their allies and clients, are in sharp conflict otherwise. It is to be hoped that after waiting a year from his election to make a serious foreign-policy speech, President Reagan plans to follow it up with equally serious bargaining.

## BRIEF EDITORIAL:



## FRANK SHEED, R.I.P.

Earlier this year, a traveling *Commonweal* editor was introduced to a bishop in London. Catching hold of the fact that the editor was from "a lay-edited Catholic journal in the United States," the bishop immediately replied, "Oh, that must be published by Frank Sheed."

No, *Commonweal* was not published by Frank Sheed, but perhaps that was only because the magazine was already being organized before this energetic Australian ever got to America. It was, in fact, the very year when *Commonweal* first appeared — 1924 — that Frank Sheed made his first lecture tour in the U.S. He was twenty-seven, on his way back to Australia to complete a law degree after four years of outdoor speaking for the Catholic Evidence Guild in London.

Frank Sheed always referred to that experience with the

Catholic Evidence Guild as his advanced education in theology. The give-and-take (often more take) of streetcorner speaking forced him to search behind the formulations of the catechism and the institutions of the church "not only to answer the questioners, but to relate Christ's revelation to their appallingly various natures, in order that they might discover unrealized needs in themselves and find those needs met in Christ." For four years, he recalled, "I lived, breathed, ate, slept, theology." There was a combative aspect to all this — combat with the hecklers, combat with modern ignorance in general — that someone temperamentally shaped like Frank Sheed couldn't help but enjoy. But one of the lessons he took from that experience ought to be chiseled into the memory of anyone regularly engaged in public debate: "The first principal fact of life I did not know when I began is that one must never talk for victory — to show oneself right and the other man wrong. . . . If you talk for victory, sooner or later you will cheat."

Frank Sheed and Maisie Ward were a glorious part of the Catholic revival of the twenties and thirties; and their publishing house, Sheed & Ward, as Frank put it, was "in the thick of the fun." Its office in London was blitzed into rubble in 1940, an employee in the States ran off with the funds in 1943; but none of that prevented Sheed & Ward from publishing the best in Catholic thought, from the Chesterton and Paul Claudel to Henri de Lubac and John Courtney Murray.

In 1947, Frank Sheed himself added *Theology and Sanity* to this roster of works. Sanity was something he was, well, crazy about. To him, it simply meant "seeing what's there" — and few of us, he argued, ever manage to see what is there. We miss the greater part of reality, we live unaware of the God who holds everything in existence. Frank Sheed considered himself a "non-mystic" and denied ever having "what is usually called a religious experience . . . the very feel of divine contact." He simply thought that the presence of God should impinge upon any sane person — like the presence of trees, grass, and sky.

*Theology and Sanity* was one of about two dozen books he wrote. When he found himself dissatisfied with a translation of St. Augustine's *Confessions* that Sheed & Ward had planned to reprint, he translated the work anew. He delivered over seven thousand open-air lectures in his lifetime, and he and Maisie Ward crisscrossed the continents, talking, writing, starting organizations. Trying to keep both the London and the New York branches of Sheed & Ward operating during World War II, he made fifteen wartime crossings of the Atlantic, once on a banana boat, once sleeping on the bomb rack of a B-24.

What kept him going? Some people believed he drew energy directly from his irrepressible and irreverent wit, from a memory full of wild song lyrics, from the bottomless supply of Ronald Knox limericks and Chesterton stories. Into his eighties, when Frank Sheed rose to speak, he began with a characteristic gesture: pushing aside the microphone. The old vigor of the streetcorner campaigner for Christ and the church was not to be denied: if God had meant men to use microphones, he would not have created Frank Sheed.

In *God and Mammon*, which Sheed & Ward published, François Mauriac describes "the race of people who, born into Catholicism, realize in earliest manhood that they will never escape from it, never leave it. They were within it, they are within it, and will be within it for ever and ever." Frank Sheed admitted that he was of that race. All his life, he recalled in *The Church and I*, he had been saying the three prayers which begin by invoking Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and end, "May I breathe forth my soul in your blessed company." On November 20, Frank Sheed did.

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## American Writers Congress

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### NEW-OLD WRITE-WING

#### A CASE OF PROGRESSIVE NOSTALGIA

"A WHIRL OF IDEAS, controversy, and catharsis." That is how the *Nation* described the American Writers Congress, held in New York, October 9-12. Of those three elements, catharsis was most in evidence. Book bannings at the local level and cutbacks in support for the arts and humanities at the federal level have left many people, not just writers, with a certain sense of cultural oppression. It was good to see some 3000 people gather to voice and, perhaps more importantly, share their angers and anxieties. In that process of sharing, however, many ideas and the opportunity for fruitful controversy seemed to get lost.

The *Nation* termed the political tone of the proceedings "exuberantly progressive." This is true in the sense that virtually all the participants identified themselves as politically progressive. Yet one should bear in mind that, in another sense, nostalgia, rather than progress, was a dominant motif. The shadow of the writers' congresses of the 1930s was a long one. The opening comments of Meridel LeSueur, an eighty-one-year-old feminist author who had participated in earlier congresses, seemed to bridge the decades a bit too effortlessly. The desire to wrap a historical mantle around the collective shoulders, as well as an exciting sense of solidarity, made it easy to forget about the less savory aspects of the history of the left in the 1930s. On the whole, in fact, the circumstances of the Congress seemed to encourage suspension of one's critical and analytical sense.

Catchwords were much in evidence. The word "union" seemed to have an almost mystical hold on many of the participants. The vote in favor of creating a National Writers Union was overwhelming, and one had the sense that expressions of doubt were not appreciated. How many considered that the nature of the writer's work might make a national union an inappropriate form of organization? Would there be a place for those who did not feel themselves part of some oppressed literary proletariat? Talk of a union also tended to ignore the fact that many of those who write make their livings in other ways, as editors for example. What would be *their*

place in the union? Also left aside was the fact that in the United States trade unions have not always been the best defenders of the rights of the genuinely downtrodden.

Some other words seemed to have a similar appeal. "Cuba" was one. The ban on importation of printed matter from Cuba certainly is inconsistent with the concept of a free market of ideas. Still, it seems unjust to cite that ban with the implication that Cuba is a model of intellectual freedom.

The interesting neologism "homophobia" was much in evidence. A noted historian of women, Blanche Wiesen Cook, used it in reference to an eminently sensible and decent article by Barbara Grizzuti Harrison in the October 3 issue of the *Nation*. Grizzuti Harrison cited the case of a New York woman who protested that Christopher Street and neighboring areas were no longer congenial places for many long-time residents, who felt they were being forced out by the burgeoning gay population. The woman in question, whose letter to the *Village Voice* was never even published, soon found herself under attack for giving aid and comfort to the Moral Majority. Grizzuti Harrison termed these attacks "nonsense," and thus committed the sin of homophobia. In fact, the thrust of her article had nothing to do with homosexuality. The piece was a plea for tolerance of diversity of opinion. The theme was simple: "The villain is an all-embracing ideology." Wiesen Cook offered an excellent demonstration of precisely the attitude her target was deploring.

One of the charges that progressives and liberals often level at the Moral Majority is that of readiness to damn individuals for their position on a single issue—abortion, prayer in schools, national defense, etc. But the conduct of many of the "exuberant progressives" at the Congress indicated a certain similarity of temperament. One also heard Raymond Aron assailed as a "whore of the CIA," implying perhaps that no one could hold opinions contrary to those of the left in anything resembling good faith. One heard expressed the hope that Bud Schulberg, who testified against many alleged Hollywood Communists during the McCarthy era, was now enjoying the comforts of the lowest circle of hell. It seemed at times that the basic question was not one of intellectual freedom for all, but simply a matter of which side would be able to impose an orthodoxy on the other. Lenin put it quite succinctly: *kto kogo*, who does what to whom.

Some other disturbing attitudes were to be found. In her powerful and generally well-taken opening remarks, Toni Morrison warned against elitism, the notion that rare things necessarily are better than plentiful ones. One wishes that her words had been taken to heart. Repeated scornful use of the term "blockbuster" suggested a rather fundamental disdain for popular tastes in literature. Tastes are not completely a given. Still, it would have been encouraging to hear someone admit that more philosophical meditations on nuclear energy, more complex works on political economy, more hermetic poetry and prose are not what progressives need to write and distribute if they actually want a large audience. Perhaps the market does have something to teach the left. There was talk of better marketing techniques for progressive literature, but no

one addressed the need to change the *kind* of progressive literature being marketed.

Despite the atmosphere of solidarity, certain progressive forces were not represented. Judging from the composition of the Congress, one would conclude that no actual Christians are taking progressive positions in print. With so much attention to the religious trappings of the Moral Majority, this was perhaps to be expected, but does not thus become excusable.

All this is not to say that the Congress had no bright spots. One heard some good sense and a great deal of valuable information circulated. An attempt, however, to unite American writers on the basis of the essentially political program of the Congress would be a risky proposition. Writers have organized quite effectively for mutual assistance and support at the local level, in structures that seek to impose no ideological uniformity and do not look to New York for centralized guidance. The attempt to create an orthodoxy among progressive writers would risk alienating those of genuinely independent mind. That would benefit no one. The possible limits on freedom of expression are already considerable. It is important to avoid adding a stronger censorship on the left to the restrictions that elements of the New Right seem ready to impose.

ERIC R. TERZUOLO

*(Eric R. Terzuolo, a previous contributor, is an assistant professor in the department of history and political science at Mount Saint Mary's College in Maryland.)*

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## Legal Services Corporation

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### VOICE OF THE POOR CAN NEEDED ADVOCACY BE SAVED?

**T**HE LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION is fighting for its life. The Reagan administration wants it killed. Congress does not appear likely to go quite that far.

But almost.

Legal Services Corporation was established by Congress in 1974—to provide legal help and representation for the elderly and the working poor who cannot afford the costly fees lawyers normally exact. Indeed the three hundred independent local legal services programs throughout the country have been supplying almost all the legal assistance that people with incomes of less than 125 percent of the absolute poverty line can hope to have. Those poor and near-poor people are the only ones Legal Services has ever been permitted to help.

Yet the House, while cutting the appropriation by twenty-five percent for Legal Services, passed a bill that would virtually forbid it from engaging in “legislative advocacy” on behalf of its clients. In simple terms, what this means is that Legal Services may not do any lobbying or present testimony to congressional or state committees when the rights or livelihood of the elderly or the poor are at stake in pending legisla-

tion. The House language also forbids Legal Services from bringing any class action or any suit against the government on behalf of its clients.

It would be astonishing if the Senate were to deal with Legal Services any better than the House has done. Indeed the Judiciary Committee of the Senate has moved to accept the House language. And there is danger that even this hamstrung continuation of Legal Services may be denied should President Reagan decide to veto any bill that keeps it alive.

All of this is downright mean, especially the prohibition against “advocacy.”

For these attacks on Legal Services are being made by the same administration and Congress which have listened with more than attentive ears to numerous requests of powerful special economic interests. As a result, many programs protective of the livelihood of the elderly, the poor, or indeed all the people as consumers have been crippled if not destroyed.

Never have the elderly or the working poor needed advocacy on their behalf as they need it now. Here are just a few of the things that have been done to these politically vulnerable Americans.

- Access to medical care through Medicaid is to be reduced by \$1 billion a year for three years. Which means that great numbers of the elderly will simply go without the medical care which they cannot possibly pay for out of their own pockets.

- Almost one million needy people are to be denied the help of food stamps in their struggle against inflation of the cost of food.

- Hundreds of thousands of their children will be denied school lunches unless they pay a full price for them—which again most of them simply cannot do.

- Some three hundred thousand of what *were* the working poor face a high likelihood of being unable to support their families—unless they can qualify for welfare—thanks to the abolition of their jobs in the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act.

- Special milk rations for severely undernourished children of the poor are to be abolished. So are summertime out-of-school lunches for hungry kids.

Obviously these people cannot lobby on their own behalf. (This is one reason why the American Association of Retired Persons is doing all it can to preserve the Legal Services Corporation.)

It isn't hard to understand why the administration or the majority in the Congress do not want to give any opportunity to Legal Services to testify. Some witnesses might point out the callousness of the actions that have been taken.

Those who care about legal justice in our country should raise their voices. It may not be too late. JERRY VOORHIS  
*(Born in 1901, Jerry Voorhis was a factory hand, a railroad freight handler, a Yale Phi Beta Kappa, a schoolteacher, and the organizer of homes for homeless boys. He served five terms as a Congressman from California before being defeated by Richard Nixon in 1946. From 1947 to 1967 he was executive director of the Cooperative League of the U.S.A. He has written ten books.)*

## TURNING PEOPLE AWAY

MORE FASTIDIOUS THAN JESUS?

**T**HERE HAVE BEEN a lot of changes in the Catholic church since the end of the Second Vatican Council—I'm sure I am not the first person to bring you this news—and some have been quite dramatic. But beneath the most obvious changes (the ones in liturgy, for example, or the welcome disappearance of the index of forbidden books) there are more profound changes, and they are beginning to have an important pastoral effect.

There has been a trend, recently, towards a stricter administration of the sacraments of baptism and matrimony. It is quite common now for parents to be told that unless they are themselves practicing Catholics they cannot have their child baptized. The same is true of marriage: unless the couple (or at least the Catholic partner) is churchgoing, the marriage won't be blessed in church. In addition, many dioceses demand attendance at marriage-preparation programs which are much lengthier and more intensive than the old pre-Cana conferences were, and unless the couple is willing to participate they can be denied a Catholic wedding.

This reflects an important shift in the church's conception of itself, a shift away from a mentality which prevailed from the Edict of Milan onward. During the period when Christendom and Christianity were considered more or less the same thing, the church was expected to

touch the lives of everyone in some way. The sacraments became rites of passage in the larger society as well as sacramentally important acts for those whose Christian belief was central to their lives. This was the age of the equation between Christianity and respectability. Never mind how you stood before God if your wedding was not blessed by the church; think of how it would look to the neighbors! The same applied to christening. This form of Christianity is dying off and shouldn't be lamented. To be Christian today is more clearly a matter of choice, and the stricter scrutiny of people's motives for church weddings and baptisms reflects a changed situation.

And I have problems with it. I don't like the idea of turning down the parent who is not a practicing Catholic but wants a child baptized, or the couple who want a church wedding because it is what their family wants, even though they themselves are not practicing Catholics. I understand the theology behind this trend, and sympathize with it. It is certainly a proper pastoral consideration to see that weddings are not routinely reduced to sentimental social occasions, but are understood instead as permanent sacramental commitments. The same goes for baptism. Parents who want their children baptized but who are not willing to live as Catholics are told that it is not right to make a decision for a child if you

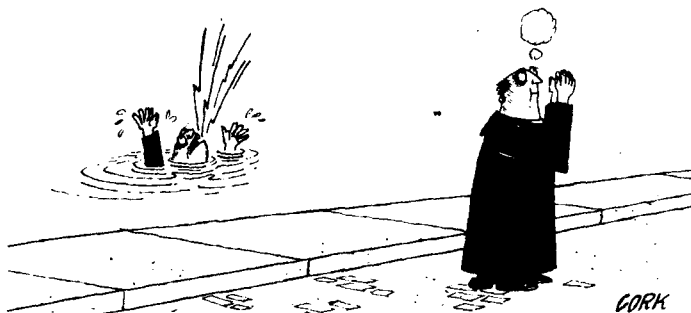
are not willing to live with the consequence of that decision yourself. The sacraments, we have been told repeatedly, are not magic.

So what bothers me? I am afraid that in moving from a period during which the church embraced too much, in the effort to be inclusive and to be all things to all men, we may now be embracing too little. To demand too much clarity of people, too sure a purchase on their motives, may be as wrong in its way as demanding too little is. We could be hurting people who feel that they are, however tenuously, part of the church, connected with us in a way which is not entirely voluntary on their part; but they feel that this relationship—however odd, complicated, or thin—is one they should honor at an important moment in their lives.

To want a Catholic wedding because your family is Catholic and expects a Catholic wedding may not be the best reason for getting married in the church, but it does show a feeling for the larger community which is part of what marriage, and Catholicism, are about. The same indefinite connection may be there in parents who feel the need to have a baby baptized, even though they are not practicing Catholics. Their desire should not be dealt with too simply. It should not necessarily be put down to a belief in baptism's protective magic, or a desire to do no more than live up to a merely social obligation, although it could be either of those things. Deeper and more binding feelings might also be involved, and even though they may not be articulated easily they should not be dismissed.

I am not entirely comfortable with the point I want to make. It seems reasonable to ask for a commitment to Catholic practice before admitting people to Catholic sacraments. But the church is not always free of responsibility for the distance some people feel from Catholic practice. In any case, the church ought to feel some responsibility and some sense of mission towards the people who, for whatever reason, live at the edges of the church.

Some of our rules and regulations show us to be more fastidious than Jesus



was. (We usually are.) Most of the disciples plainly did not know what was going on at the Last Supper. It is certain that they weren't nudging one another to point out that this was the first Eucharist. What Jesus's words and actions meant became clear only after the fact.

This is true of our own sacramental lives. What I understand now about the Eucharist is not at all what I understood when I was seven years old; when I was married I had very little insight into what marriage was about. After fourteen years I know a good deal more, but not as much, I am sure, as my grandfather, who is in his nineties and who has known many more years of marriage, fatherhood, and grandfatherhood than I have.

The same growth in knowledge may go on in the lives of those whose relationship to the church is marginal. We cannot assume that it never does, in any case, and it seems wrong to sever the last thin connection those people have to Catholicism. Are we that sure of our own relationship to the mystery of the church? I know of a priest who married a couple because they asked him to, as a man whose friendship and Christian belief mattered to them. They were not sure of their own belief, but they drew strength from his belief, a belief they may or may not come to share. The priest is not sure that he should have married them, but he feels that it would have been a terrible thing to turn them down.

But more to the point: a dissident Russian Orthodox priest told of a woman who asked him to baptize her infant son. She was not a believer, so the priest asked why she wanted to have her son baptized. "I don't want him to be empty, like me," she answered.

That's not nothing. I want to make it clear that I do sympathize with the reasons for the new strictness, and sacraments should not be allowed to degenerate into merely social occasions. But I hope there is a good deal of flexibility here. In respecting the desire—however obscure, or obscurely expressed—to fill up the emptiness, to bring the light of meaning to a world drained of meaning's possibility, the church fulfills its most profoundly important contemporary vocation.

JOHN GARVEY

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## Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

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# HOW ACCURATE'S ACCURATE

A MISS IS AS GOOD AS A MILE

ONE OF THE better-kept secrets of World War II was the fact that bombers had a hard time hitting anything—that is, anything *in particular*. The Norden bombsight was popularly believed to allow "surgical strikes" and "pinpoint bombing" but one man's pinpoint, as the Strategic Bombing Survey revealed after the war, was often another man's cow pasture. Bombs were dropped all over Europe, but rarely on target. A major U.S. daylight raid on the German ball-bearing plants in Schweinfurt in August, 1943, was typical. A total of 1122 high explosive bombs weighing 395 tons were dropped by 376 bombers. The 8th Air Force later concluded there were 88 "direct hits"—that is, bombs which landed in the general plant area—and 55 actual strikes on factory buildings. The rest of the bombs landed somewhere, too, of course, and killed about 300 German civilians, including 26 children, and another 100 slave laborers from Poland and France. In the course of the raid about 60 U.S. bombers with their eight-man crews were shot down—roughly one for every bomb that landed on a factory building. The ball-bearing plant, while damaged, was soon back up to normal production.

The 8th Air Force and the British Bomber Command referred to this sort of thing as "strategic bombing," which they hoped would shorten the war. It did not. German air defenses forced the bombers to fly too high for truly accurate bombing, and the British, at least, decided early in the war to fly only at night. Freeman J. Dyson, the British-born physicist now at Princeton, worked on operational research during the war, and was often appalled at the poor results when he drew up bomb plots after the raids. In his memoirs, *Disturbing the Universe*, Dyson describes the reaction

of one Bomber Command official to a preliminary bomb plot recording the results of a raid on Frankfurt. "Awfully few bombs inside the circle," the official said. "You'd better change that to a five-mile circle before it goes in."

Another Bomber Command study, conducted earlier in the war, examined the actual results of bombs dropped by pilots—about half of those taking part in the raid—who *claimed* to have hit the target. Impact photos showed that only one in four had actually dropped bombs within *five miles* of the target.

This inability to hit things accurately with bombs had several results. One was a high level of gratuitous killing and destruction. Hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed by the three million tons of Allied bombs dropped on Germany. Their deaths did not shorten the war by a day. Another result was a change in strategy, from "pinpoint" bombing of important factories, railroad marshaling yards, dry docks and so on, to "area bombing." Flying at night at high altitudes, the British switched targets to something they felt they could hit—cities. The new approach, never officially acknowledged, called for destroying the industrial suburbs where workers lived. But even putting it that way is a kind of euphemism. The target was simply people, on the theory that killing enough of them would crack civilian morale and perhaps spark the sort of popular revolution which ended the First World War. This was a failure too. On two occasions—Hamburg in July, 1943, and Dresden in February, 1945—firestorms were created which turned huge areas of the target cities into smoking wastelands, killing scores of thousands of people, but the effect on German war production was negligible. In the final stages of the war against

Japan the Americans, too, finally abandoned the illusion of "pinpoint" bombing and adopted the British approach. Early in 1945 a huge 1000-plane raid generated a firestorm in Tokyo which leveled hundreds of acres of housing and killed more people than either Hiroshima or Nagasaki. Cities we could hit, but cities weren't the enemy. Pain we could cause, but pain doesn't win wars.

It is accuracy which determines the efficacy of violence in war. In this regard battle and boxing have much in common. Boxers bob and weave and jab but they do not often land a solid punch. Even one or two, properly placed, can be enough to do the job. War is much the same. It is highly particular. Weapons make an opponent formidable, and it is weapons which must be destroyed. But weapons and the men who wield them are somewhere, and it is there a blow must be landed to be effective. Five miles away won't do. Down the street won't do. The blow must land on the exact spot where a soldier or a tank or a submarine is. In modern war the emphasis has been on volume of fire, not target practice, as a means of hitting an enemy. The machine gun, the artillery barrage, and carpet bombing are all ways of directing many lethal missiles to the general area where the enemy is. The law of averages is expected to do what aiming cannot. It takes tons of munitions to produce a single enemy casualty in this way, but production is what modern industrial states are best at. Nevertheless, the goal has always remained accuracy—a particular blow on a particular spot—and the recent development of precision-guided munitions threatens to transform war on the battlefield. The technology which raised volume of fire to nightmarish levels, now allows us to really *hit* things.

With nuclear weapons, in spite of their great power, the importance of accuracy is equally acute. In the popular mind The Bomb is a weapon of Armageddon, a tool of apocalypse, an instrument of total destruction, a means to obliterate an enemy. But who is "the enemy"? Ordinary citizens in crowded cities, men and women like you and me, the victims—not the planners—of war? The first bomb was dropped on Hiroshima because a city

was something we could hit. The day of the bombing Truman described the city as a military target, but it was nothing of the sort, as he doubtless knew. It was just a place so big you couldn't miss it, and so crowded with people the result was bound to be on an unprecedented scale of horror.

The plan worked. At any rate, the war ended shortly thereafter. Ever since, cities have been high on the target lists and their dwellers have lived unhappily with a kind of vision of the way the world will end. But it is important to recognize that cities did not become targets because that's where "the enemy" is, but simply because they are big enough to find at night and to hit. The American military—and very likely the Russians as well—were unhappy with this approach. They wanted to win wars, not murder half the globe. As soon as military planners on both sides began to get more accurate weapons, they aimed them at different targets, generally of a military nature. The most important military targets, of course, are weapons, and the most dangerous weapons are nuclear weapons.

This change has been a long time in coming. In the late 1940s and early 1950s the U.S. Air Force had little confidence in its ability to hit things. The B-47 bomber was thought to be doing fine if it dropped its bombs within 2500 feet of the target. With the advent of thermonuclear weapons this was close enough to destroy pretty much anything fixed on the ground, but of course the bombers took so long to arrive there was no chance of finding the enemy's bombers still on the ground. His most important weapons, therefore, could not be destroyed. Missiles were quicker, re-entering the atmosphere at better than 10,000 miles an hour, but the early warheads were so

bulky, and the whole vehicle so technically crude, that the CEP of the first American ICBM—the Atlas—was "several miles," probably about five. CEP means "circular error probable" and refers to the radius, generally given in nautical miles, of a circle around a target within which half the missiles aimed at it will land. A CEP of 5 nm. means half the missiles will land within 5 miles of the target.

The earliest missiles stood up in the open and could be knocked over by a firm shock wave. Five miles was close enough. So the Americans, and later the Russians, put their missiles underground in silos, and then hardened the silos with steel and concrete. They made them very hard indeed. An ordinary brick house in the Georgian style, say, would be largely destroyed by an overpressure of 5 pounds per square inch, or 5 psi. No one knows just how hard modern missile silos are, and the military estimates are naturally classified, but the professional literature on these matters cites figures of 2000-4000 psi. Hardness to that degree means that a missile silo could only be destroyed by a direct hit—a warhead detonating sufficiently close by to put the silo inside the fireball (about a mile in diameter for a 1 megaton burst in the air), or inside the crater (about half a mile in diameter for a 1 megaton burst on the ground). This suggests that a missile intended to destroy a hardened missile silo would require a CEP of about 0.4 nm. for a 1 megaton warhead. There are many other factors which must be weighted in estimating the "probability of kill" (the PK) of a given warhead against a given target, but the most important of them by far is accuracy. That is also the factor which has generated the most argument during the last few years.

The argument, highly technical in its extended form, centers on a claim by a group of defense analysts in Washington that the Soviets now have missiles sufficiently accurate to serve as counter-force weapons—that is, to pose a threat to our weapons of fixed location (Minuteman silos, bombers on airfields, and nuclear submarines in port). The Soviet counter-force threat is cited as a principal argument for building the MX or some other,



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perhaps mobile, land-based system of *un*-fixed location, and for building counter-force (i.e., accurate) missiles of our own. A second group of defense analysts claims the first is crying "Wolf!" where the Soviets are concerned, and that the advent of counter-force weapons will destabilize the balance of terror by pushing both sides to fire first in a crisis, rather than run the risk of losing its weapons on the ground. In the literature this is referred to as the "use it or lose it syndrome." A further danger posed by a counter-force threat is the fact that the best defense against it would be a computer-controlled launch-on-warning system. This might "save" the threatened weapons (by using them) but it would make the world hostage to computer-error, which while it might be improbable, could never be impossible. Then, truly, the human race would have surrendered its fate to Fate.

The argument over counter-force accuracy centers on three points. The first is whether *any* missile can have a reliable CEP on the order of 0.1 to 0.3 nm. The Air Force, which periodically fires Minuteman III missiles from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California to Kwajalein Lagoon in the Southern Pacific, claims we are already within that range and that the MX will do even better. One Air Force officer told me a year ago that he and his colleagues routinely cite CEPs in terms of feet, and another said the second generation MX, already being designed, will have a CEP of about 90 feet.

The second point of contention, pressed by the cautionary critics, concerns the question of bias—the known *tendency* of any missile to miss the target. Bias is a fixed quantity, a number like CEP, which represents the distance between the center of a cluster of impact points and the intended target, as established by actual test results. A missile with a CEP of 0.25 nm. might have a bias of 0.1 nm. According to the defense consultant Richard Garwin, an authority in these matters, *every* missile has a bias, and it has *never* been predicted in advance. A bias can have many causes—idiosyncracies of the hardware, gravitational anomalies along its flight path, severe weather conditions in the area of

re-entry. American missile tests are mostly conducted from East to West across the Pacific. An attack on Russia would require firing over the North Pole. The cautionary critics argue that variations in bias make CEPs unreliable. The trouble with this argument is that ICBMs have been tested over a long period of time, and results show whatever they show. Military and technical men who have studied the results generally insist the missiles can really attain the accuracies claimed for them. Charles Draper, the Einstein of missile guidance who runs the laboratory named after him at MIT, recently published a letter in the *New York Times* in which he admitted the bias problem but said the point was whether it was "greater than the lethal radius of the warhead . . ." Back in the late 1940s, when missile-designers were still thinking in terms of 5 nm. CEPs, Draper predicted we would eventually get to 0.1 nm. No man has had more to do with making American missiles accurate, and he claims bias is not greater than the lethal radius. "There is indeed grave risk in using ballistic missiles," he concluded, "but that risk is not uncertainty of accuracy."

But the point of contention most difficult to settle involves the problems in coordinating the launch of many hundreds of missiles so that their warheads would land pretty much simultaneously on their targets, a *sine qua non* for a successful first-strike. For one thing, many of the missiles would have to pass through the same "window" at the apogee of their trajectories in order to land on contiguous targets. Another problem is "fratricide"—the danger that warheads exploding on target will destroy others as they arrive nearby. A coordinated mass launch involves so many unknowns and imponderables that Jimmy Carter's Secretary of Defense, Harold Brown, once referred to it as "a cosmic throw of the dice." What ruling group, the cautionary critics ask, would risk the fate of its regime and country on something which has to work perfectly the first time?

But this shifts the whole discussion from a technical point to a debating point—from the question of accuracy to a

question of Russian intent to prepare for a first-strike. From time to time, since 1945, the defense community in Washington has alarmed itself with claims the Russians were close to achieving a genuine first-strike capability. The "bomber gap" of the early-50s and the "missile gap" of a few years later proved chimerical. The current episode of fear has not yet ended. But talk of first strikes has an unreal quality to it. With a handful of fanatic exceptions, not even the military believe the Russians are craftily preparing a surprise blow. The first strike argument is in fact little more than a useful theoretical tool for comparing the characteristics of weapons. It is the technical point, the question of accuracy, which really matters.

It is our genius as a species to be able to find a way to do anything we can imagine. The truth of the matter is that missiles are accurate enough to serve as counter-force weapons. They can destroy anything on or reasonably near the surface of the earth, so long as we know where it is. The long history of technical improvement of inertial guidance systems has reduced CEPs from miles to fractions of miles to hundreds of feet. Further improvements in accuracy can be expected from terminal-guidance—that is, homing techniques—and from satellite-navigational systems. The significance of accuracy is not that it clears the way for a first strike. The cautionary critics are right about that; a regime would have to be crazy to contemplate such a thing. But in the event of war it would be equally crazy to let alone what immediately threatens—weapons and the systems which control them. Accurate missiles prepare the ground for nuclear war—extended fighting for purely military objectives, a clash of weapons. No one doubts such a war would wreck the world. It is said that the towns in Germany are only two kilotons apart. But missile accuracy makes such a war possible and indeed forces the hand of military planners. If you *can* destroy enemy weapons, you *must*. This fact is now the driving force behind American nuclear weapons policy, the thing which explains what we are building and why we are building it.

THOMAS POWERS



# What the Polish revolution has accomplished

MIECZYSLAW MANELI

**I**N AUGUST and September of 1980, the workers of Poland shattered the bureaucratic system and dogmatic ideology that had prevailed in their country for thirty-five years. In 1980-81, the Poles accomplished what twice they had unsuccessfully tried to do in 1956 and 1970. Even if the movement toward democratization that they launched were suddenly to be arrested by outside intervention, the significance of the Polish example would still be enormous for the world.

The visible results of the strikes, and the agreements signed between the governments and the various committees of strikers, may be summed up as follows:

- For the first time in the history of Communist regimes, the government negotiated and compromised with groups of its own population represented by spontaneously and freely elected delegates.
- The Communist government legalized new freely organized trade unions which began to embrace nearly all of the working population in the country. It pushed aside its own bureaucratic trade unions, but did not dissolve them.
- The Communist government had to admit officially that the working masses in a socialist country needed an organization to protect their own interests against their socialist employers.
- Six months later (April-May, 1981) the Communist regime had to legalize "Rural Solidarity," a body representing private landowners and farmers.
- The government had to amend its censorship law in order to assure freedom for trade-union journals. Furthermore, it had to agree to assure freedom, albeit limited, to the mass media to publicize the views of the trade unions, the Catholic church, and other non-conformists.
- Under social pressure, the government was obliged to

change existing labor laws and promise new ones more appropriate to the new political balance.

- The courts began to be used both by the trade unions and the government to interpret the constitution and the laws to apply them in a more equitable fashion. The courts even intervened to supervise administrative procedures.

- The government legalized the right to strike, a right which had initiated a new era in Western capitalism. Thanks to this law, socialism, too, has entered a more civilized era.

- Poland has become a new type of democracy with its own limited but authentic system of the rule of law.

- Perhaps the most important changes were in the attitudes of the people. Traditional revolutionaries, especially socialists, always believed that once the situation was ripe to attack the old regime and establish new institutions, the passive masses would awaken and join the vanguard party. This is precisely what happened in Poland. Apathy, skepticism, spinelessness, and lack of vision gradually disappeared and were replaced by new energy and vision. What were at first sporadic acts of resistance became an avalanche that overwhelmed the government. New leaders suddenly appeared as if to confirm the old Hegelian observation that whenever history creates a new opportunity, it will also produce the appropriate personalities. The new leaders of Urban and Rural Solidarity were unknown workers and peasants who suddenly turned into astute politicians, gifted strategists, persuasive speakers; they also instantly learned how to wheel and deal behind the scenes.

**H**ISTORY HAS NOT KNOWN such an outburst of political creativity since the period of the English, American, French, and Russian revolutions. But history once more confirmed another truth: the new leaders could only get their education in the old schools in order to apply it creatively in the new circumstances against their own teachers.

Lech Walesa and his friends were taught a thousand times that a revolution can win only if it is based upon an alliance of the workers, peasants, and the intellectuals. This is precisely what they achieved. For the first time in the history of a

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Communist state, a real, not a bureaucratic, political alliance arose between the townspeople and the peasants. Even more, in line with the old socialist principles, these leaders found that the workers who were concentrated in large industries were their most effective agents. Those workers possess and represent greater power because of their sheer number, concentration, and their direct influence over the economic nerves of a modern state. Workers' councils had first been organized in modern Poland in 1956-1957. They emerged as spontaneously as the Russian workers' councils (soviets) did during the revolution of 1905. History repeated itself and once more at a "higher level." From their inception the Polish workers' councils in 1956, and afterwards in 1980, were independent of the Party. Even in 1956, their organizers and new theorists regarded the councils as a new germ of true socialist democracy. Therefore the Russian, East German, and Czechoslovak bureaucrats concentrated their criticism of the "Polish road to socialism" on the workers' councils, although in 1956 they still were in their infancy. After Wladyslaw Gomułka's seizure of power, he and his neo-Stalinist entourage immediately began to restrict them, eventually emasculating the workers' councils to such an extent that they ceased to exist. The experience and theory behind these councils, however, did not vanish. The new revolutionary upheaval of 1980 started with the revival of the form which had arisen in 1956: independent councils of employees in the most important industrial plants.

These new councils reflect a new social development in Poland. Polish workers today are highly skilled with a good general and professional education. Many have earned university degrees and most of them have had a secondary education. The average intellectual level of the delegates is higher than that of the party and administrative bosses. They know they are capable of running their factories without party and union hacks. A cultural and educational revolution really did take place during the thirty-five years of Communist rule. The results, however, were not anticipated by the party bosses.

The Marxian prediction that an obsolete social system trains its own gravediggers came true under bureaucratic Communism. This type of Communism really proved to be a "prison of the productive forces" (a phrase from *The Communist Manifesto*) but before it was challenged by the 1980 strikes, it had already new cadres in its own schools, universities, factories, and laboratories. These cadres are better equipped to run a modern industrial society than the ossified "politruks," the faceless bureaucrats without initiative.

And finally, the bureaucrats used to argue that socialism is a higher type of humanism and freedom, and that in a socialist society no discrepancy should exist between theory and practice. The discrepancy between slogan and reality actually had been increasing and the people decided to put an end to that. They wanted the freedom in the books and speeches to become freedom for them. The triumph of the Polish movement is the triumph of freedom. The Poles pushed history ahead, and history is—as Hegel wrote—always a history of the development of the idea of freedom. In the course of the struggle for freedom, everyone changed. Even the dogmatic leaders of the

party have started to use language and express ideas for which they would have been jailed by Poland's eastern and western neighbors. Nothing is more intoxicating than freedom. There have been irreversible changes in the psychology, perceptions, and attitudes of all Poles. Thus the impossibility of returning to the previous state of affairs—except by military force from outside. Such a military resolution is always possible, but it would be a terrible admission of political and moral defeat. The future grave would be deeper, the potential gravediggers multiplied.

ONE OF THE consequences of ideological totalitarianism in Communist Poland was truly paradoxical: the government outlawed all political theories and ideologies with the sole exception of Catholic social teaching. All forms of liberal, secular humanistic, personalist, existentialist philosophies were prohibited. But the government's grip failed to subordinate the Catholic religion and its social philosophies. Totalitarian despotism caused the entire opposition to concentrate around and within the Roman Catholic church. The church became a vociferous and "official" spokesman for all the oppressed, deprived and persecuted; the only legal redoubt for creative intellectuals. In this way at least one of Stalin's ominous philosophical and political premises was realized: those who are closest to us are the most dangerous and should be eliminated first. A lay observer, not trained in official dialectics, might have presumed that socialist, liberal, humanist philosophies would be regarded as kin by the Communists and therefore more or less friendly. That is not so according to classic Stalinism, which revived, let us add, certain premises of the Inquisition.

The Polish Communists defeated their "heretics" but were unable to overcome their "pagans," the Catholic church. In a very short time, they found that there were many advantages in having only one center of dissension. They discovered that religious dogmatism is less dangerous than non-dogmatic pluralism and rationalism.

The church, for its part, was also satisfied that criticism of its traditional dogmas was now restricted to less respectable and feeble minded neo-dogmatists. Dogmatism thereby became the philosophical basis for antagonism as well as cooperation between party and church.

The position of the Catholic church was strengthened by two additional factors: the internally weak Polish Communist regime needed the church to support its rule without Soviet tanks, while the church, on the other hand, needed the Polish Communists lest the country be subjected to the bloody terror imposed in the Baltic countries, Belorussia, and the Ukraine.

This symbiotic relationship between the party and the church hierarchies was complicated by the emergence of the new trade unions and the resurgence of Poland's independent, liberal, and secular intellectuals.

Poland is becoming more and more a pluralistic society, a reality that even the members of the Central Committee freely admit. Pluralism means the simultaneous undermining of two ideological monopolies: the party's, and the church's. The

Western press, especially the American newspapers, often present the solution in Poland as if it were the result of the providential leadership of the Polish masses by the Catholic hierarchy. The Catholic hierarchy's contribution was undeniable, but it is nevertheless a matter of fact that they have felt uneasy over the spontaneous upheaval which could not be controlled by any of the anointed leaders. Now both church and party must compete with a new, powerful partner: common sense and a mass movement.

**T**HE VICTORY of Polish political neo-rationalism presents a challenge not only to dogmatic Communism, but also to the ideological stagnation which has become so characteristic not only of the Eastern but of Western countries during recent decades. This is an especially important, although little noted, element of the Polish challenge to the West.

What has happened in Poland proves that it really is possible to deprive a Communist regime of its most vicious traits and to propel it toward a more humane polity and economy. Such changes cannot be called anti-socialist because the people do not want to change the basic principles on which their socialist system operates. Polls taken in Poland and published in Poland and in the U.S. show that only a small minority wishes restoration of private capital. Among the Polish trade unionists and intellectuals, no call has been heard to return public property to private hands. The overwhelming majority wants only to find some new way of management. They believe that public property should truly benefit the public. They have not yet decided how this should be accomplished; but they know that the fundamental faults of bureaucracy cannot be cured by more bureaucracy; that political despotism is the principal cause of economic inefficiency; and that democracy, freedom, and tolerance will not only be powerful politically but also economically.

Already in 1956 some Polish thinkers started to propound the idea that "nationalization" or "socialization" of the means of production should not be identified with the "verstaatlichung," i.e., with primitive forms of governmental ownership. The Soviet ideologues and their vassals denounced those concepts as anarcho-syndicalist heresy. Indeed, as long as the bureaucracy is the sole agent of the legal property-owner ("the state"), the workers under socialism are as expropriated and alienated as under capitalism. To the extent that the workers wield real influence, bureaucratic privileges will be undermined.

Recently Polish workers received powerful support: the Encyclical of John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*. The pope stresses that production should be organized in a way that recognizes the human creative nature of the workers, giving them outlets for their initiative. The pope declares that these demands should be fulfilled by any system of property ownership. In this way, he challenges both Communism and capitalism.

The Polish people have embarked on this road, and their church hierarchy supports them. This fact was manifested during the famous recent consultations by the party-government, primate, Solidarity triumvirate.

This is the deepest meaning of the Polish challenge to the Eastern and Western economic and social systems: the Poles have started to construct an alternative to bureaucratic despotism without returning to capitalism, and they may show that there is an alternative to the Western economic institutions that accompany political democracy and tolerance, an alternative that can be based upon communal ownership of the means of production. Such experiments may be subversive to the Soviet empire and to Western warlords, but refreshing for the rest of the world. The historical significance of the Polish experiments cannot be overstated.

## NEW-SOUTH SHOWCASE FACES NORTHERN-STYLE CONFLICT



# Clouds over Atlanta

ROGER M. WILLIAMS

**T**HE DOWNTOWN FACE of Atlanta never stops changing. No sooner does a skyscraper materialize than its mirrored-glass sides are coated with dust arising from still another hotel or pedestrian mall or freeway-widening. Yet the more Atlanta reaches for the twenty-first century, and for

status as an "international" city, the more it runs up against problems of race. Not the old, Southern-style problems of bigotry and legalized segregation but the modern, national problems of poverty, crime, and despair among urban blacks.

The mayoral campaign, which ended late in October in the election of Andrew Young, highlighted two facets of the new racial conflict: whites' anxiety at having "their" city run by a black administration and irritation at seeing "their" gleaming downtown populated by crowds of idle and—as they reckon it—menacing blacks. More broadly, it pointed up the growing

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but little-acknowledged disparity between the Atlanta of white entrepreneurial dreams and the Atlanta of black welfare reality. As black city councilman John Lewis told the *New York Times*, "We've been pushing an image. Now we'll have to deal with it. A whole segment of the population here has been left behind."

In fact, the city may well be as racially polarized now as it was two decades ago, before a go-getter businessman mayor named Ivan Allen convinced his establishment colleagues that racial moderation would bring peace, prosperity, and national acclaim. That notion, which proved to be accurate, was bought by Atlanta's black middle class; the black "underclass" was too impotent to matter. Now the middle class has doubts, and the underclass, while still generally impotent, is much more openly hostile.

This election demonstrated the fragility of the black-white cooperation that Atlanta has long boasted. Andrew Young, the former Congressman and UN Ambassador, would seem to have been an easy winner. Young has intelligence, compassion, an impressive *vita*, and a record of political victories in the city. Yet he was forced into a runoff by a white legislator named Sidney Marcus. In the final tally, the "crossover" vote (whites voting for a black candidate) was far smaller than in Young's congressional races.

Young used to run especially well in the affluent white "Northside," where it became a badge of liberalism to host cocktail parties and kaffee klatsches in his behalf. Last summer, however, Northside neighborhoods bristled with Marcus posters, and the most common political remark heard among whites was, "It's time for a white mayor."

Certainly Atlanta's downtown business establishment felt that way. The establishment, desperate to field a strong white candidate, sounded out Wyche Fowler, an attractive and capable Atlanta-area Congressman. Although he was offered a \$400,000 campaign chest to start with and plenty more later on, Fowler declined to make the race. His suitors then settled, with little enthusiasm but lots of contributions, on Marcus, who has gained a reputation in the Georgia House for being attentive to detail and a successful negotiator.

Those two qualities, whites said, had not been demonstrated by either Young or his black mayoral predecessor, Maynard Jackson. The charge was plain wrong about Young, who, as a civil rights leader and a campaigner for himself and Jimmy Carter, repeatedly displayed an ability to negotiate, conciliate, and, as he puts it, "bring people together." But the charge contained considerable substance when applied to Maynard

Jackson. In his two terms in office, Jackson has been a mediocre mayor. His performance has been marred by a grating "do for blacks" attitude, administrative weakness at the departmental levels, and his own pompous style. Says a liberal white Atlanta lawyer: "Maynard has a genius for offending people. He's really turned off his white supporters."

**A**S THE NEW mayor, one of Andrew Young's major tasks will be to turn them back on—while strengthening his tenuous relations with young black activists. (Most of them supported a rival black candidate in the primary.) That would be a tough balancing act in any city. It is particularly tricky in present-day Atlanta, where a form of Reaganomics—the drying-up of massive federal funds—is sure to swell the new racial gulf.

Metaphorically, the gulf flows directly through downtown, and on its opposite banks stand poor blacks and establishment whites. To them, there is no metaphor, only very different perceptions of the use and abuse of city streets.

The issue is rooted in the physical and functional transformation of downtown Atlanta. What was once an ordinary downtown that served the needs of ordinary citizens has been remade to serve the needs of others: tourists and conventioners, businessmen and developers.

To this former resident, the changes are startling, and more than a little saddening. Gone are block after block of old buildings—most of them, to be sure, undistinguished, but part of the living fabric of a city. Gone with them are countless small restaurants, shops, and hotels, equally undistinguished and therefore equally part of the workaday city. Together they formed the downtown habitat of thousands of low-income blacks, and many low-income whites as well.

Some of that, in the normal course of things, was bound to disappear. Atlanta's downtown developers, moved by visions of grandeur or by simple greed, seem determined to make it *all* disappear—and, in the process, to set new boundaries for the people it has served. This stems less from a malicious design than from a native impulse among movers and shakers: They are remaking the city, with great effort and sometimes at great risk, and they are impatient with obstacles. After all, aren't huge building projects good for everyone? More jobs, more attractions, more money pouring in, and so on through the familiar litany of downtown redevelopment.

Much of the litany is true, or at least defensible, and the Atlanta boom provides evidence. The city has attracted a wealth of new businesses, has quickly risen to a leading position among tourism and convention capitals, has created many new opportunities for the black middle class. The basic elements of downtown's redesign—"megastructures" encompassing hotels, office space, and smart shops and restaurants—have been tailored to produce precisely this effect, as well as to attract suburbanites bold enough to venture into the glossy new central city. The local poor need not participate, except as service workers.

But the remaking of downtown has paralleled a familiar American malaise: white flight and a steadily increasing black

**Extra copies** of the special issue on abortion (November 20, 1981) are still available (10-25 copies, 60¢ each; over 25 copies, 50¢ each).

majority in the city at large. It has also paralleled massive unemployment among young blacks and, more recently, severe cutbacks or threats of them in federal assistance programs. Perhaps there are no more blacks on Atlanta's downtown streets these days than there were ten or twenty years ago. But they are bolder, more hostile, and, to a broad range of whites, more frightening than before. Actual street crime, while certainly higher than in pre-development days, does not present so great a problem as harassment and the seeming threat of crime.

**P**ART OF THIS problem lies in local naiveté about life elsewhere; white Atlanta is still in social shock over the murders, separated by months, of a secretary and a conventioneer, as if such events do not occur in most downtowns. A larger part is rooted in the anger and frustration of middle-class whites over what they regard as outrageously aggressive public behavior on the part of blacks: drunks and panhandlers who won't accept a simple brush-off; street dudes who direct crude sexual remarks at passing females. "A young woman shouldn't have to put up with the comments she'll hear on our downtown streets," a well-to-do lawyer told me. "You used to get that only south of Marietta Boulevard [in the black commercial district]. Now it happens a long way up Peachtree Street."

Dan Sweat, the able and temperate president of Central Atlanta Progress (CAP, a downtown chamber of commerce), calls black crime downtown "the city's number-one problem." Sweat says, "I told that to one of our black business leaders the other day, and he said, 'That's racist talk.' I said, 'No, sir, that's the fact, and we have to face it.' " Sweat is threatening to post, Martin Luther-like, a list of CAP demands on the new mayor's door. Whether he does that or not, "public safety," as it is termed in the list, will be the top item in the first discussions with the mayor.

CAP's unenviable task, explains an astute Atlanta politician, is "to keep downtown together as a tourism-convention attraction and as a viable business district—in the face of non-stop suburban growth." That task becomes more difficult in the presence of large numbers of unoccupied and sometimes unruly blacks. The city has taken a few steps to enhance street safety—assigning more patrolmen, erecting police sentry stands at key intersections—but CAP and its supporters want more: to quote from its list of demands, "a tough public position against crime"; the monitoring of "pedestrian harassment," with "police follow-up" on specific cases; the drafting of "enforceable ordinances" to "reduce peddlers, derelicts, vagrants, and other 'street people' "; consideration of proposals enabling businesses to hire off-duty policemen "with full off-premises power of arrest."

"There is a feeling among our people," Dan Sweat says, "that we've lost our lead to Houston and Dallas, that investors and so on will be scared away." Some whites talk defiantly about not "abandoning" downtown to the blacks; for certain retail businesses, an additional sharp drop-off in white traffic would indeed be tantamount to abandonment.

Thus the lines are drawn, and one is tempted to ask, whose downtown will it be? The developers', to make it safe for the civil and affluent? Given their power and resources, the developers have the clear advantage. But can they press it successfully? Mayor-elect Andrew Young will not possess the legal power or law-enforcement muscle to sweep the streets of offending blacks. And Young, owing his election and primary allegiance to the black community, will not have the political assurance to do it. Even if none of these realities existed, Atlanta's image, so dear to the establishment, would suffer incalculable damage if the city began stationing a get-tough cop on every downtown corner.

When I interviewed him recently, Andrew Young minimized the safety in the streets problem, saying that policemen on scooters would cut sharply into crime and that many of the alleged harassers pose a "perceived threat," rather than a real one. Atlanta's worried whites will not be impressed by such blithe assurances. To them, the second Battle of Atlanta—their Atlanta, of growth, acclaim, and profit—is well underway.

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## Screen

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### NOT CRICKET

QUO VADIS, LADS?

**C**HARIOTS OF FIRE. It's such a pretentious title. What does it mean? *As the World Turns. Edge of Tomorrow*. It's that kind of title. (At least *Upstairs, Downstairs* makes literal sense.) This film opens with all the young chariots wheeling along the beach, singeing the surf with their speed. Actually, they're mere mortals, even less—Englishmen—hardly more than boys, a track and field team in training for the Olympic Games in the 1920s. The jaunt along the beach, hair flying, spume and sand splattering over their running whites, isn't so dashing as it seems. They're at a seaside resort, after all. In England. They're just trying to keep warm. Keep moving, lads! That's the spirit! Don't let the climate, meteorological or moral, get you down.

This isn't the first scene, only the credits, but already we get the message. It is that all of England is to be represented by these rosy-cheeked lads, and not just in some long-forgotten Olympics. Truth to tell, one of them is not so rosy. He's quite the swarthy bloke, though that's part of the message, too. Taken all together, this band of runners stands for the state of the nation at a particular historical moment, a rather prolonged one that separated Matthew Arnold's two worlds, "one dead, the other powerless to be born."

The credits still aren't over, but maybe we could skip ahead a scene or two. Despite the little Union Jacks sewn on each runner's togs over his heart, director Hugh Hudson and script-writer Colin Welland fear we haven't got the message

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yet. The first scene therefore delivers it again, from a pulpit. The pulpit is in St. Mary's in the Strand, a church symbolically occupying the middle of the road, a memorial traffic jam of a church snarling one of London's main thoroughfares, a monument to obstruction in the High Street of history. The occasion is the funeral many years later of one of the runners we've just seen in their prime. A number of survivors are present as well, come to recite the Ode to an Athlete Dying Old. Don't you see? Passage of time and all that.

These runners are the last flowers of Victorian England, blooming too late, though they never realize it, coming into bud after the frost of the First War. In the next scene, we are back in those halcyon postwar days. We know that's where we are because as Harold Abrahams (Ben Cross) and Aubrey Montague (Nicholas Farrell) arrive at Cambridge Station, every baggage porter is wearing a hideous prosthesis or bearing the scars of some appalling wound. Montague and most of the others take rather scant notice. Only Abrahams is aware, as we see when he corrects a verger at Caius College who addresses him by a juvenile nickname. Since being in the war, he states coldly, he isn't addressed thus. The rebuff draws, as soon as Abrahams's back is turned, an anti-Semitic remark.

Abrahams represents a new age. A Jew and a veteran, he has no time for any of the customary niceties or English hypocrisies. He goes after what he wants without hiding his ambition or limiting his means. Wanting to be the fastest runner in England, he privately employs the best coach there is (Ian Holm) to train him. When the Masters of Caius and Trinity (Lindsay Anderson and Sir John Gielgud) call Abrahams in for a friendly chat about the English tradition of amateurism, he angrily tells them to get stuffed, and goes his own way. They console themselves with another discreet round of anti-Semitism.

*Chariots* centers on the rivalry for the laurels between Abrahams and a Scot named Eric Liddell (Ian Charleson). They are easy to tell apart. While Abrahams trains demonically to be a world-class runner, Liddell takes up running reluctantly, switching over from being his country's greatest rugby wing after he wins a track meet he hadn't even planned to enter. Abrahams is doing everything he can to break out of the constraints his religion places upon a man in English society. Liddell, who is a Scots fundamentalist, is trying to cling to the constraints of his religion. Abrahams has a mistress (Alice Krige); Liddell has a sister (Cheryl Campbell).

In spite of the differences between the two men, Liddell also ends up challenging the old deferences and paternalism. When the British team arrives in Paris for the games, it happens that the qualifying heat for Liddell's event is to be held on a Sunday. He's sorry, he says, but he can't break the Sabbath. Heavy pressure is brought to bear. At a reception for the team Lord Birkenhead (Nigel Davenport) tells Liddell that the Prince of Wales (David Yelland) would like to meet him. Birkenhead, the Prince and an insensed Lord Cadogan (Patrick Magee) get Liddell alone and turn on the heat. He must set aside his scruples in this matter for the good of England, they say. But he stands his ground against them all.

Evelyn Waugh's *Vile Bodies* has the final word on this era. In my impatience with *Chariots*, I found myself rewriting this scene where Liddell confronts the Olympic Committee. I wanted one of Waugh's flighty girls to pop in from the reception and pass a remark. "The entire affair really is too shame-making, isn't it? Or is it?" For me to improve the scene this way wouldn't be cricket, though, because the movie is bound by the facts. *Chariots* is a true story, as the presence of the Prince of Wales reminds us. (David Yelland's resemblance to the young Edward is uncanny.) Edward's own historic refusal to run seems foreshadowed by Liddell's refusal. One wonders, listening to the ragging that Liddell gets, what old Cadogan—Lord Curmudgeon—would have to say to Edward a dozen or so years hence.

A repercussion of history with more immediate consequences for us is that sticking to the true story of the Abrahams-Liddell rivalry makes for a whopping anti-climax. The fact is that after one event in the Olympic trials in England, the two men never ran against each other again. Since most of the movie revolves around Abrahams's obsessiveness about beating Liddell next time out, it really is too sick-making for them not to race again, isn't it? Or is it. In elevating soap opera to the status of *Masterpiece Theater*, our own times also seem to have elevated badly constructed stories like this one into unvarnished truths. *Chariots* has been made to have the kind of ultimate pointlessness of something seen in weekly installments.

It's a good thing that the laddies in *Chariots* are distance men, for while you've been reading this, they've still been trying to get through the credits. That takes great stamina in a film with fifty speaking parts, three credited "Location Managers," four "Art Directors," four more "Film School Attendants," and five "Wardrobe Assistants." Keep running, lads! That's the spirit! Do you feel as if you're carrying the whole of the British Isles on your shoulders? You may well be, judging by the credits. Perhaps *Chariots* succeeds better than I think as a national saga, the true epic of modern England. The film is a welfare state all by itself.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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## Stage

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### CHINA MAN

MAKING SENSE OF THE HYPHEN

**D**AVID HENRY HWANG, whose first play *FOB* won an Obie last spring, has two plays running at the Public Theater—*The Dance and the Railroad* and *Family Devotions*. An impressive beginning for a dramatist in his early twenties. Although the ghettoizing labels of contemporary criticism—woman playwright, black playwright—disconcert me even when I use them, it is necessary to identify Hwang as a

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Chinese-American playwright. His plays are attempts to make cultural sense of the hyphen that holds that double designation together.

*The Dance and the Railroad* is set in 1867 on Gold Mountain, the name that Chinese immigrants, mixing the splendor of a dream with the hard rock of fact, gave to the American setting in which they helped build the transcontinental railroad. The play takes place at the top of a mountain where Ma (the characters use the performers' names), a bumptious innocent, comes to persuade Lone to teach him to dance the hero of a Chinese opera. The action is double. While Lone is putting Ma through the rigorous discipline of his art, down below the Chinese laborers are on strike, demanding the reinstitution of their shorter hours (it is difficult to believe that they ever had an eight-hour day in 1867) and an increase in wages. Lone, who was taken from opera school and shipped off to America, practices his movements as a sign of separation from the other workers—dead men, he calls them. It is an assertion that is as much cultural as personal. Ma, a bridge between Lone and the other men, echoes Lone when he learns that the workers have settled for less than the desired wages and says that he does not want to be part of them, but Lone insists that they have proved that they are not dead men by sticking to the strike until they achieved victory, however compromised. As Ma goes down to join the others, Lone stays for one final dance, this time not an act of separation nor of survival, but a dance for its own sake.

The most impressive set piece in the play is the opera that the two men perform. When Lone brings news of the strike settlement, he is ready to celebrate by letting Ma dance the hero's role he covets, although he has explained that, with years of training, the younger man is never likely to be more than second clown. Ma insists on dancing his own story, being the hero of his own opera. There are sardonic possibilities in the second clown as hero and a certain ambiguity in the play which suggests that Lone and Ma may be as much first and second clowns as master and pupil. Yet, that is an intellectual projection, an attempt to posit meaning rather than feel it. The tone of the last dance suggests that Lone is merging his Chinese self and the American context. This sense of *The Dance and the Railroad* becomes clearer once we hear the *di-gou* in *Family Devotions* explain to Chester, who wants to escape his stereotypical American parents, that he must discover his origins—it's on your face, the old man says—before he can successfully leave home. The Chinese face reflected in the high polish of Chester's violin, the Western instrument, is as neat an image for Hwang as playwright as I can imagine.

With the example of the use of Chinese opera in *Dance*, one might be tempted, in approaching *Family Devotions*, to evoke *ch'ou*, the comic roles of the Peking stage (Ma's second clown), or to recall the domestic farce that sometimes accompanied classic Chinese theater. It is a temptation to be avoided. The genre here is television situation comedy and the cross-cultural joke is that these relentlessly American types are Chinese or, in one instance, Japanese. The serious underlay of the fun-and-games is that all the generations of the family have adapted Western ideas and ways, but at a superficial level that

not only denies the Chinese past but empties the Western present of content. The Christianity of the two grandmothers is a divisive faith, narrow and oppressive, and their celebrated family devotions are the kind of self-advertisement that Jesus warned against in the Sermon on the Mount (v. Matthew, 6:5). The next generation is glossily American (the sets and costumes shine like television advertisements) in its consumerism, its belief in publicity (Robert's pride in his role as kidnap victim), its acceptance of Willy Loman's concept of being well-liked (Wilbur's pleasure in being elected Mr. Congeniality at the club). When the *di-gou*, the second brother, the distant relative from the mainland, comes, he challenges his family's Western masks—not as a Communist, as the Christian women suspect, but as a family force with older, deeper, truer roots. The younger generation cannot escape their immediate surroundings, he indicates, without finding their own versions of the old women's religion, their parents' passion for acquisition, unless they carry their Chinese identity with them.

If Lone's tradition is primarily replenishing, the *di-gou*'s can only be that through destruction. At least, that is a way to read the final scene in which the *di-gou* and the old women duel with the family history as weapon, and they drop dead when he shreds their fictions. Some reviewers have found it difficult to move from the familiar farce of the opening of the play to the presumed mysticism of this confrontation, but I suspect that the movement is from farce to farce, from television comedy to a kind of grotesquerie. "What's the matter," says the self-preoccupied Robert at the end of the play, "you act as though someone were dead," and then, as usual, he goes on talking about money. If Lone's final dance suggests the positive note I indicated above, it has to be tempered by the fact that what awaits below, victory or no victory, is the grueling work on the railroad and the cruel rejection of the Chinese once their usefulness is past. If *Family Devotions* ends in an image of destruction, it too is tempered, this time by the artificiality of the form which allows the slaughter of attitudes not people.

Of the two plays, *The Dance and the Railroad* is the more effective. The integration of the opera and the strike is achieved by keeping the one off stage and by vivifying the other through the choreography and the dancing of John Lone, the collaborator without whom Hwang's play would be little more than an outline. *Family Devotions*, occasional laugh lines aside, is burdened with jokes about tax shelters and Cuisinarts, with plastic people, with noise as a substitute for wit, with all those aspects of farce that suggest CBS's most recently canceled sitcom rather than American farce at its best. That, I assume, is what Hwang wanted to evoke, but it is a sometimes trying evocation and it does make the transition to the end of the play difficult. Even so, *Family Devotions* confirms what *The Dance and the Railroad* had already indicated—that Hwang is an imaginative author who has his subject and the need to come at it from the most unlikely angles.

GERALD WEALES

# Books: CRITICS' CHRISTMAS CHOICES

## Alasdair MacIntyre

ALASDAIR MacINTYRE is the author of *After Virtue* (University of Notre Dame Press). He teaches philosophy at Wellesley College.

**T**HE SECOND most important fact about Christmas is that it is one of the times of the year when the suicide rate rises. In a season when we are summoned to integrate the story of our lives into the biblical story, too many find their own lives disintegrating into despair. One reason is that we have so often lost any capacity for understanding our lives as embodying a narrative structure—let alone narratives in which there is hope of a happy ending. A remedy is to read books in which the dramatic power of the tale told derives from the author's acute sense of those human realities which cannot be grasped except through narrative.

This was not the aspect of Edward Mendelson's *Early Auden* (Viking, \$20., 407 pp.) which most reviewers praised. But it is a central virtue of his account of how Auden first made himself into a poet and then developed his powers in such a way that he came to write what Mendelson calls "counterfeit poetry." "In the 1930s Auden's voyages are like his loves, beginning splendidly and turning false." Mendelson's narrative makes the particular poems new for us by refocusing our attention to them.

Auden's journey did not of course end when Mendelson takes leave of his narrative, in 1939. That was the year in which Auden availed himself of a longstanding European alternative to despair by going to America. And thinking of emigration to America as an alternative to despair is not necessarily a mistake. Hope is a peculiarly American virtue. But with the virtues, as with poetry, counterfeits abound. And peculiarly American counterfeits for hope are common. Alice Thomas Ellis in *The Birds of the Air*

(Viking, \$10.95, 156 pp.) says of one character that "he was American and liked all events and occasions—no matter how unfortunate or bloody—to end in sweetness and reconciliation . . ."

*The Birds of the Air* takes place at Christmas in Britain. "Christmas had come, as always, at an inconvenient time," and every member and friend of the family who gather together bring their own peculiar defeats and disappointments to the feast. One consolation for one's own Christmas through the years will be to reread this splendid comedy of tragic moments and realize that one's own Christmas is not as bad as this one. The English appear collectively as a singularly unpleasant tribe whose totems and taboos—the Queen, Winnie the Pooh, small animals some of which are to be petted but not hunted, and others hunted, but not petted, all with equal sentimentality—circumscribe their vestigial Christianity. Individually the characters are treated with what is not always recognized as a literary virtue, truthfulness.

What *The Birds of the Air* brings out is how close a truthful Christian view of the moral world may be to the view taken by someone approaching that despair which leads to suicide. The crucial difference is that on the Christian account that which would warrant despair is always only part of the story, and the essential word is *story*. Theologians are apt to fail us at this point. Their education, like that of theoretical physicists or economists, too often makes them think of truth as embodied primarily in generalizing propositions. A splendid exception is Stanley Hauerwas, whose *A Community of Character* (Notre Dame, \$7.95, 298 pp.) shows how claims about the truth of certain narratives provide the context for the central claims of moral theology. Hauerwas has set himself tasks of immense difficulty: to integrate themes from recent analytical moral philosophy, from biblical studies, and from contemporary moral debate. If he does not en-

tirely succeed, at least he restores our confidence that at its best theology need not fail those whose vision of the world has the integrity of the best novelists and the best critics.

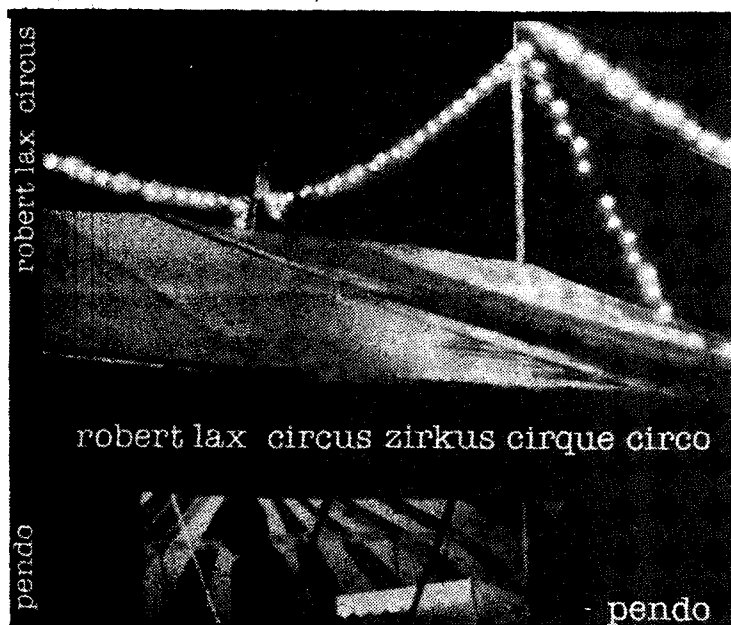
## Josephine Jacobsen

JOSEPHINE JACOBSON has just published her sixth volume of verse, *The Chinese Insomniacs* (University of Pennsylvania Press).

**A**LL of the books I have chosen are poetry, thus displaying my personal bias and pleasure, and enabling any unregenerate soul who just doesn't like that form of literature to skip the piece at once.

A. R. Ammons's *A Coast of Trees*, (Norton, \$12.95, paper \$4.95, 52 pp.) is a brief collection of mostly brief but never slight poems, and it is this very brevity which makes the book so remarkable. It has the impact of the best work of a poet long since established as a formidable and outstandingly original contributor to the best of American poetry. Within the framework of nature acutely observed, the poems in their characteristic blend of the colloquial and the metaphysical take up, in their unique accent, problems simultaneously ancient and immediate. In spite of his immense productivity, instead of labeling him as prolific, we have instead the sense of Ammons's immense fecundity. There has been for some time an increasing note of sadness in the work, but never that of despair; rather, of a difficult and waiting acceptance.

It's possible that Julia Randall is the least widely known of the truly fine American poets writing today. *The Farewells* (Elpenor Books, Chicago, \$10.00, 76 pp.) shows her wit, perception and high lyric ability, together with an exceptional variety of form. There runs through *The Farewells* a strong concern with the destructive, with unaffordable losses, not merely of whale and



Our dreams have tamed the lions,  
have made pathways in the jungle,  
peaceful lakes; they have built new  
Edens ever-sweet and ever-changing.  
By day from town to town we carry  
Eden in our tents and bring its  
wonders to the children who have  
lost their dreams of home.

A new edition of Robert Lax's "Circus of the Sun" has been published under the title *Circus* by Pendo-Verlag in Zurich. The book includes photos by Bernhard Moosbrugger, and translations in German and French of the Lax poem. Sections of the poem, translated into Spanish by Ernesto Cardenal, are also included. The American distributor is Falkynor Books, Box 8060, Hollywood, Florida, 33024. The book costs \$10.

crane and greenness, or even of people, but of quality, of "... all those/ who keep an undegraded eye/ and tongue to tell a master by." It is true that the book addresses a literate reader, but this does not appear as a disadvantage, certainly not to Randall. She has as sure a sense of her locality, in the physical world, in the world of poetry, as she has the sense of continuity—myth, to the daily detail—that illuminates and excites.

I reviewed Marie Ponsot's *Admit Impediment* (Knopf, \$12.95, paper, \$6.95, 144 pp.) for *Commonweal*, so my notice here will be brief. This book, the product of twenty-five years in the sensibility of a gifted poet, speaks of and to women here and now, but also of things which concern all human beings. There is a marvelous sense of universality in her specifics. The feminine predicaments she so clearly and poignantly sees never emerge as less than fine and skillful poems. It is a varied, resourceful, wise, and impressive book; and it is very very moving.

William Meredith's *The Cheer* (Knopf, \$8.95, 62 pp.) seems a book peculiarly suited to the Christmas season, since it is in essence a book of hope, thus making it a sport among most current books worth reading. What makes its attitude peculiarly effective is the sense one always has of how clearly Meredith understands the causes of an opposite viewpoint. He is a poet of ex-

treme sophistication, both intellectual and technical. His humor, which is a quality basic to the work, is really an uncanny sense of proportion. Often he is very funny, and when he is, always our intelligence profits. There is strong emotion in the book, but it permeates rather than assaults. His control and grasp have grown, book by book, and their cumulative power is a joy to the reader. That cheer is steadfast, but it is also toughly perceptive. "Here all we have is love, a great undulating/ raft, melting steadily.

We go out on it/ anyhow. I love you, I love this fool's walk./ The thing we have to learn is how to walk light."

Also strongly recommended are Daniel Hoffman's *Brotherly Love* (Random/Vintage, paper, \$5.95, 170 pp.), dealing, with originality and in depth, with Penn's relations with the Indians, and William Jay Smith's rewarding and distinguished *The Traveler's Tree & Other Poems* (Persea Books, \$13.95, 167 pp.), with some stunning woodcuts by Jacques Hnizdovsky.

## John Murray Cuddihy

JOHN MURRAY CUDDIHY is a professor of sociology at Hunter College in Manhattan. His books include *The Ordeal of Civility* (Basic Books) and *No Offense: Civil Religion and Protestant Taste* (Seabury).

**G**ILLIAN FEELEY-HARNIK'S *The Lord's Table: Eucharist and Passover in Early Christianity* (University of Pennsylvania Press, \$19.95, 184 pp.) is a landmark. In their attempts to root Christ's Last Supper in the Jewish passover meal, scholars have always bumped their heads against one crucial fact: critical ingredients of the Jewish passover are conspicuous by their absence: the passover lamb, for instance, is not even mentioned.

The problem arises, Feeley-Harnik maintains, because we confine the Christian passover to one meal in one room on one day. But the haggadah assumed and left to us by the participants in Christ's seder—viz., the Passion narratives—included the crucifixion and resurrection in the meal. For the participants, the Last Supper itself was merely preliminary. "The crucifixion is the main part of the meal, the *shulhan arukh* or 'prepared table.' The cross is the table of the Lord where the bitter herbs and the paschal lamb are consumed. . . . The passion narrative is the passover haggadah. Jesus himself intones the Hallel."

Not a jot or a tittle of the sequence (seder) is changed by Jesus. But the meanings are radically transformed and

reversed: on that hill tabooed by temple law, Golgotha, outside the walls of the holy city, Jesus is not "passed over" by the angel of death. He is killed, Feeley-Harnik shows, for violating commensality, for eating and drinking with publicans and harlots. And then the final scandal: his followers eat his body and drink his blood. The true Israelite "created" by the early Christian haggadah "was a 'glutton,' a man who ate indiscriminately, like an animal, and was eaten." The Christian revolution was a culinary, which is to say, anthropologically, a cultural revolution. Jesus is Isaac come of age, freely immolating himself.

Alvin Gouldner died suddenly in Madrid on December 15, 1980. His last published work, *The Two Marxisms: Contradictions and Anomalies in the Development of Theory* (Continuum \$17.50, 397 pp.) shows how the theoretically residual status of "civil society" in Marxism blinded it to the rule of the state and, in a sense, invited Stalinism.

Concerning the two Marxisms: Marxism as science does not, cannot, reflect on itself freely, unstintedly; Marxism as critique stemming from Hegel and Protestant humanism, reintroduces reflexivity, voluntarism, and "idealism" into Marxism. This contradiction is not accidental to, but constitutive of, Marxism.

Near the end, Gouldner indulges some dangerous "outlaw" speculations ("Nightmare Marxism"): suppose bourgeois private property, instead of being an obstacle to civilization, "really turns out be the basis of civilization"? Suppose that the turning point of history is the rise of the bourgeoisie, not its demise through expropriation? This is a subtext in Marx. And beneath his primary paradigm, when he turns to the East, and analyzes the Asiatic mode of production, there is also, Gouldner writes, a chauvinism in Marx, "an ethnocentrism exalting the West as embodying a unique promise for the world's future development." For me it is a matter of some emotion that Gouldner, in his final work, has taken leave of economics and is talking the language of civilizations. Weber, once more, has won a decisive victory over Marx.

In his discourse on the origins of

*Wealth and Poverty* (Basic Books, \$16.95, 295 pp.) George Gilder finds that both Adam Smith and Karl Marx misidentified the spirit of capitalism with the market mechanism for exchanging its products. To do this invites another mistake: the identification of capitalist culture and motivation with utilitarian ideology. Smith and Marx must then explain the social benefits of such venality by invoking the magic of unintended consequences: God (the "unseen hand") in the case of Smith, History (the "cunning" of Hegel's dialectic) in the case of Marx.

So free enterprise is vulgar enterprise. The easy antichrematism of intellectuals has had a field day with "capitalism" so defined. Even neoconservative intellectuals can give it but two cheers.

But capitalists are no greedier than doctors or writers or professors of sociology or assistant secretaries of energy or commissars of wheat, Gilder has recently written. By his rediscovery of the voluntary and donary dimensions of microeconomics, and by spelling out their endless consequences, Gilder puts us all in his debt. For Emerson, surprise was the most American thing about America. Capitalism is the economic institutionalization of surprise. No wonder sociologists discover a mysterious "taboo on socialism in America."

A final book. Arthur C. Danto's *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art* (Harvard University, 212 pp., \$17.50). The provenance of Danto's title goes back, ultimately, to the transfiguration of Jesus on the Mount.



The book is a long meditation on Brillo boxes putting themselves forward as works-of art, or, "gerrymandered" (Danto raids everywhere for his brilliant figurations) by interpretation into expressiveness, into metaphoricality. Malraux proposes seeing art as a metamorphosis performed by museums and juxtaposition and time (history). Danto proposes art as a metaphor of the commonplace. Art makes obvious things odd; it paradoxicalizes the ordinary. It defamiliarizes. Danto is fun. His study transfigures the commonplace expression "for example." It self-exemplifies. Buy it and read.

## Walter F. Murphy

WALTER F. MURPHY, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence, at Princeton, is the author of *The Vicar of Christ* and *The Roman Enigma* (Macmillan).

WHEN I first came to Princeton for an interview in 1957, a senior colleague told me that a serious scholar had two options: to read or to write. The choice becomes no less painful over the years, as both eyes and creativity fade. Last spring, however, a month's visit to the European University Institute in Florence, where none of the typewriters spoke English, enabled me to catch up on my reading.

I finally read James Agee's *A Death in the Family* and Graham Greene's *The Power and the Glory*. The dark mood of the first clashed with the bright life of Florence and the joyless Christian self-sacrifice of the second with the city's happy pagan sensualism. James Clavell's focus in *Noble House* (Delacorte, \$19.95, 1206 pp.) on international financial intrigue better fits the Florentine obsession for the tactile pleasures of money caressing the palm.

Eugene Kennedy's *Father's Day* (Doubleday, \$13.95, 488 pp.) allowed me, as an alumnus of Notre Dame, to revel in the nostalgia of a well-told tale that recaptured, if not the institution's reality, at least the image it has in my happier memories. Similarly, but less pleasantly, nostalgic was Pat Conroy's

*The Lords of Discipline* (Houghton Mifflin, \$12.95, 499 pp.), a compelling, though uneven, novel about the Citadel, my home town of Charleston, S.C., and the clannish violence of young males.

Andrew M. Greeley's *The Cardinal Sins* (Warner, \$12.95, 400 pp.) provided careful guidance around the rising middle class Irish parishes of Chicago and its chancery. In a haunting way, it brought back memories of innocent, caring love that for me overrode its story of the seamier sides of clerical life. Nelson De Mille's fast paced *Cathedral* (Delacorte, \$13.95, 483 pp.) struck no chords of remembrance, only fear of the real possibility of organized terrorism—and the perhaps equally destructive counterterrorism—cutting into the heart of an American city.

In my academic field of constitutional jurisprudence, John Hart Ely's *Democracy and Distrust* (Harvard University Press \$6.95, 268 pp) came out in paperback this year and demanded re-reading. It is a closely reasoned, clearly written book prescribing a limited set of policy-making roles for judges. I think Ely is fundamentally mistaken in characterizing the American political system as one of representative democracy rather than constitutional (or liberal) democracy. Nevertheless, I respect his argument's force and make the book required reading for undergraduates and graduate students.

Bernard H. Siegan's *Economic Liberties and the Constitution* (University of Chicago Press, \$19.50, 384 pp.) provides a jurisprudential justification for Ronald Reagan's revival of Social Darwinism. In many ways an infuriating tome, it is nonetheless useful in presenting in respectable intellectual terms an old view of the relationships among individual autonomy, private property, and governmental power that most liberal academics—and judges—have ignored since the 1930s.

In theology, where I claim great interest but small competence, I made my happiest discovery in many years when I found James T. Burtchaell's *Philemon's Problem* (ACTA, 4848 N. Clark St., Chicago, Ill. 60640, \$2.95, 178 pp.) I had not recalled this creative work's re-

ceiving the attention it deserves. If taken seriously, its radical argument would shake down the thunder from the sky of the institutional church and rekindle the faggots in the old Holy Office. Burtchaell would replace canon law with Christian love, the notion of God as the Last, Great and Irascible Double Entry Bookkeeper with that of Loving Father, and the roles of Christ as "saviour," "redeemer," and dread judge with that of herald of God's love for mankind.

Raymond Brown's *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (Paulist Press, \$4.50, 204 pp.) linked my interests in social science, textual analysis, and theology. By deftly creative literary and historical scholarship, he reconstructs the sort of community to whom St. John left his gospel and the various crises those people must have experienced near the turn of the first century. Brown combines a novelist's imagination with a scholar's careful concerns for evidence and inference to turn what seems to be an impossible task into a ripe occasion to teach in a fascinating way about the development of Christian doctrine and community.

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## Kenneth Woodward

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KENNETH L. WOODWARD is an editor at Newsweek and co-author with Arthur Kornhaber, M.D. of *Grandparents/Grandchildren: The Vital Connection* (Doubleday).

THE FOLLOWING is a brief list of books I would gladly buy for myself or others if, like all paid reviewers, I hadn't received free copies.

*The Analogical Imagination* (Crossroad, \$24.50, 467 pp.) is a remarkable exercise in systematic theology for a number of reasons. David Tracy argues convincingly for the necessity of traditions and defines the roles that the arts play as disclosures of religious truth. Father Tracy knows the ins and outs of contemporary hermeneutics like the backyards of Yonkers, N.Y. and, when he wants, can summon just the right phrase to summarize complex subjects, such as literary deconstruction. This is

philosophic theology as it is meant to be written. The price is heavy but the ambling footnotes alone are worth the investment.

*Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford, \$19.95, 306 pp.) was published in 1980 but this classic is worth recommending for years to come. Calvin College historian George Marsden demonstrates the complex origins of Protestant fundamentalism and convincingly locates its roots in Scottish Common Sense Realism. The rise of the Moral Majority makes this must reading.

Mormonism is another kind of fundamentalism and Klaus J. Hansen's *Mormonism and the American Experience* (University of Chicago, \$15, 257 pp.) is the best short introduction to this fascinating movement. A stunning reminder of just how much nineteenth-century religious preoccupations are with us yet.

David V. Hicks's *Norms & Nobility* (Praeger, \$21.95, 176 pp.) never received the notice it deserves as a brilliant proposal for a Christian *paideia* for secondary schools. No Christian educator, Catholic or Protestant, should neglect this book by a gifted young Rhodes scholar and tough-minded headmaster who knows what direction education can and must take.

*Rabbit Is Rich* (Knopf, \$13.95, 467 pp.) finds Harry Angstrom at middle age and still running—this time, out of gas. It also finds John Updike at the top of his form, sure-handed as always and more at home with his subject than in any of his novels since *Rabbit, Run*. But maybe that is because Rabbit, Updike and I are all middle-aged and rather liking it.

Martin E. Marty writes so many good and important books that it would be easy to overlook his short and irenic addition to the Journeys of Faith series, *By Way of Response*, (Abingdon, \$7.95, 143 pp.). In it, Marty reflects on his own life journey which, in so many ways, is our own.

As always, I returned this year to a book which has sustained me in its wisdom and clear writing for over twenty years, Joseph Pieper's *Leisure the Basis of Culture*, first published by Pantheon in 1952 and now available in a paperback edition. (NAL-Mentor, \$2.50, 128 pp.).

Still the best short introduction to the sense and sensibility of Catholic philosophy. Or so it seems to me.

## Saul Maloff

SAUL MALOFF, a novelist and critic, contributes regularly to *Commonweal*.

**B**EGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT: *Pieces of a Decade*. By Ellen Willis. Knopf, \$12.95, 317 pp.

A debut only in the sense that this is a first collection of pieces that have been appearing in various periodicals since the late sixties. Ellen Willis, now a columnist with the *Village Voice*, embodies the best of her generation, and is by all odds one of our liveliest, most interesting, vivid, fractious, contentious, pellucid essayists. Her attention falls upon its proper objects, which is to say rises directly out of the ideas, forces, impulses, historical winds which distance her from you and me. Not so much radical as defiantly post-radical, she is a militant

feminist, a self-professed bohemian, a clear-eyed left libertarian (which is to say she is no sectarian or dogmatist) more passionately concerned with cultural and sexual politics than with quotidian reformist politics. She quickens, brings to immediate squawling life, almost every subject her intensities compel her to; the spectrum is wide: popular culture (rock and its variants, movies); various social issues and themes clustering around feminist (and not only feminist) preoccupations (abortion, pornography, sexual power politics, marriage and the family and alternatives to both). A strong, agile polemicist who is never anything but deeply serious, she can and very well may infuriate readers of opposite views—on abortion, on marriage, on sex, on being fruitful and multiplying—on any of these urgent questions; and that is all the more reason for giving her the fullest hearing. In any case, you had better, for she will not be denied.

*Walt Whitman: A Life*. By Justin Kaplan. Simon & Schuster. \$15, 432 pp.

Think of this as supplementing rather

than replacing Gay Wilson Allen's biography *The Solitary Singer* (1967). Kaplan's biography of our presiding national poet and good grey fox, as admirers of his previous ones on Mark Twain and Lincoln Steffens will not be surprised to hear, is judicious, subtle, full-bodied and, on top of that, a rich, dense tale well-told. Now, barring an impossible discovery of attics stuffed with heretofore unknown primary sources establishing the precise identity of the quadroom lover and other Whitmanesque inventions, concoctions, evasions and mystifications, this *Life* will stand handsomely for the rest of the century and beyond.

*The Temptation of Eileen Hughes*. By Brian Moore. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, \$11.95, 209 pp.

Moore's novel is a little more than a novella, in size, scope, scale, conception, dramatic projection, but that is an aspect of its virtue, evidence, if any more were needed, of a masterful writer in absolute control of his means. The characters are Ulster Catholic; a rich middle-aged businessman, his sluttish wife, an

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innocent girl who is the object of the man's obsessional—indeed demented, lunatic—love. If love is the word: he is in fact a failed saint, a priest manqué, and his self-abnegating “love” is far closer to the medieval “courtly” variety than the soiled carnal. But the narrative, though compelling, is only by the way. If you can still take pleasure in fiction beautifully executed, shaped and finished by the hand of a master potter, gaze, then, upon this comely, harmonious object.

*The Men's Club.* By Leonard Michaels. Farrar, Straus, Giroux. \$10.95. 181 pp.

Even more, this is essentially a novella or sequence of stories within a loose frame, the honorable, ancient device of assembling a group of diverse characters with stories to tell and letting them go on until they've hanged themselves. In this instance, a group of men talking about (what else?) women, sex, love, their troubles, life, and hard times. Very California, exceedingly Now. Some annoying stylistic mannerisms and a rather hokey “resolution” are more than offset by impressive inventive power, imaginative energy, narrative velocity.

*Conversations With Gore Vidal.* Edited by Robert J. Stanton and Gore Vidal. Lyle Stuart. \$14.95. 319 pp.

Not quite our Oscar Wilde, not yet nor ever to be our Dr. Johnson, Gore Vidal is one of the last of the really good talkers, a rare breed of cat if not a virtually extinct species—witty, clever, smart, churlish, bitchy, stylish. Stylish in both senses: theatrical, stagy, classy and fastidiously concerned with the shapes and sound of utterance. Even when he intends to outrage and inflame (to shock and scandalize the bourgeoisie) his delight is audible, and infectious; and he is always good to listen to on his favorite subjects—sex, books, politics, culture, the writer's life, the infamy of critics and lamentable inferiority of all other writers—even when he is dead wrong, which is not nearly as often as you might hope.

*From Bauhaus to Our House.* By Tom Wolfe. Farrar, Straus, Giroux. \$10.95, 143 pp.

A companion volume to his previous grievous bodily assault on modern art

(painting, mostly, mainly abstract expressionism and its variants and offshoots), *The Painted Word*; this time the objects of his anathemas are the towering “glass box” mausoleums which violate the skies of our great cities. Wolfe's passion is borderline paranoiac, unembarrassed nativist, rampant xenophobic. Bauhaus, Gropius, Moholy-Nagy, Mies van de Rohe, their cohorts and co-conspirators—and before these desecrators our abject, craven Europeanizers bent their knees! (Even Schoenberg and European influences in

music, Freud and . . . but once the fever takes hold, all are consigned to hell.) And yet, and yet, and yet: the man has a point, an important one, and his little book, even if it overstates its case, sometimes wildly, is lively in the familiar vulpine spirit and eminently worth reading. Especially if you share his prejudices (as I do—I who would like to level midtown and downtown Manhattan and replace both with the Palladian style of Georgian Bath's great crescents and see a perfect imitation of Chartres or St. Paul's where the Seagram now stands).

## Madonna Kolbenschlager

MADONNA KOLBENSCHLAG is the author of *Kiss Sleeping Beauty Goodbye* (Doubleday).

**M**Y CHOICES for “gift” books this Christmas will include three very divergent works published in the last year which, nevertheless, have some important things in common. One, Anne Wilson Schaef's *Women's Reality* (Winston Press, \$6.95, 169 pp.) focuses on our relations with each other as men and women. Another, Julian Simon's *The Ultimate Resource* (Princeton University Press, \$14.50, 415 pp.) is a discussion of the prospect of our relations to the earth and its resources. My third choice is Matthew Fox's new collection and interpretation of Meister Eckhart's Sermons, *Breakthrough: Meister Eckhart's Creation Spirituality in New Transition* (Doubleday Image, \$7.95, 579 pp.), a meditation on our relations with the transcendent.

All three books represent deeply personal experiences of the authors; they come out of the veins and viscera as well as the cerebra. Each implicitly documents a personal odyssey, a wrestling with some particular aspect of understanding our human condition. As with good friends, these books invite dialogue. You can be convinced by them, soar with them, plunge with them, argue and spar with them. They have that all-important “ruminative” factor that makes passages in them reverberate long after you've read the last page.

The fundamental paradigm for all of our relations is found in the bond between man and woman. Marx, among others, recognized this relation as an index of authentic human development and a gauge of appropriate relations to everything else. Anne Schaef's *Women's Reality: An Emerging Female System in the White Male Society* provides what I would call a “second stage” feminist perspective. It offers, not only an experienced therapist's view of what femaleness has become and of the nuances of sexual micropolitics, but also an analysis of the macropolitics of a masculinized dominant culture. The acculturated personality of the white male has created a system—institutions, structures, attitudes, methodologies, theologies—that have become counterproductive in the contemporary era. Schaef taps into the richness of the alternative “female” system, distinguishing it from “femininity,” illuminating its redemptive power for the future. She suggests that women as well as men recognize their complicity in the perpetuation of the white male system, and that clarity—not guilt—shows us a way out.

If feminist philosophers have convinced us that women as well as men are capable of more than the sum of their biological endowments and socialization patterns, Julian Simon's *The Ultimate Resource* proposes that earth itself is something more than the sum of its material and quantitative resources. In challenging the contemporary myths of

"overpopulation" and scarcity," Simon emphasizes the infinite capabilities of the ultimate resource: the human imagination. An economist, Simon challenges the Malthusian models that still dominate public policy by focusing his argument on long-term effects rather than short-term adjustments. Reduced population might, paradoxically, be the most critical obstacle to progress. A higher birth rate and influx of immigrants may actually raise productivity as well as our standard of living. Natural resources may be infinite. In short, if you've been depressed by the news from the Club of Rome and other environmental sages, Simon provides a fascinating riposte.

Matthew Fox's *Breakthrough* is a refreshing interpretation of the Rhineland Dominican mystic-preacher who was posthumously condemned by the Church in the fourteenth century. The new commentary is as much Meister Eckhart as it is Meister Eckhart, but this adds to the richness of the encounter. *Breakthrough* explores the roots of Eckhart's theology in Scripture, in Scotus and Aquinas, in Celtic mysticism, and in his association with the Beguines and women mystics of his era. Eckhart's spirituality of creativity and wholeness, of compassion and blessing, is timely, and Fox acutely observes the "sin behind all sin" that Eckhart sought to exorcise: the dualistic consciousness. Eckhart's theology of "letting go" assumed that notions of God, as well as the self, could become idolatrous. His prayer seeks the ultimate conversion: "I pray God to rid me of God." Fox has mediated the master well. Share it with a soul-friend.

## John Carmody

JOHN CARMODY is adjunct professor of religion at Wichita State University and co-author of *Ways to the Center (Wadsworth)* and *Contemporary Catholic Theology (Harper & Row)*.

**M**Y LIST is eclectic, joining a few books I have found exciting to a few others I'd like to see get wider exposure.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith's *Towards a*

*World Theology* (Westminster, \$18.95, 206 pp.) is exciting, mind-expanding. He argues that world history is making the faiths more aware of their mutual interpenetration, and is calling for a theology of their whole. From years as a scholar of Islam, Smith is sensitive to the great need for nuance, but his conviction that transcendence has been a constant historical experience, and his Christian faith, make him willing to brave the disdain of academic specialists and risk sketching an interpersonal, "colloquial" theology of the whole. Those who work in academic comparative religion will appreciate his courage, as well as his wisdom, and those who know only Christian faith will profit greatly from his breadth.

Jacques Ellul's *Perspectives on Our Age* (Seabury, \$10.95, 128 pp.) is a good self-introduction to a provocative social critic. He explains his journey to Marxism and Reformed Christianity, making a persuasive case that Marx's social analyses are more complementary to biblical faith than antagonistic. He also



demonstrates the widespread effects of contemporary technology, and is refreshingly disgusted with the small impact he has been able to make on the bureaucracies of the French nation and the French Reformed Church. The result is a Barthian stress on God's "outside" reality, which gives a basis both for criticizing current culture and maintaining a staunch hope.

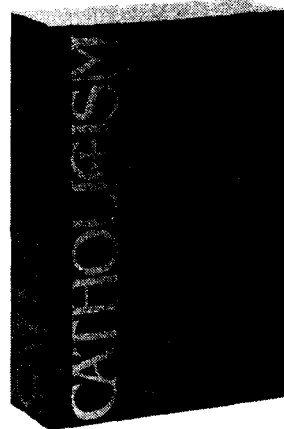
Robert McAfee Brown's *Gustavo Gutierrez* (John Knox, \$3.95, 89 pp.) is a solid contribution to John Knox's "Makers of Contemporary Theology" series. Brown is thoroughly an advocate for Gutierrez's positions, especially the key ones of solidarity with the poor and the priority of praxis. The reader comes away feeling that s/he knows "Gustavo" quite well, and that Gustavo is a theologian well worth pondering. In-

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James T. McCartin  
**Aunt Kate**

It was only in retrospect  
that I realized she was mad.  
As a child she was love  
surrogate mother who took us  
orphans uglified from neglect  
made us her own  
A raccoon with her pups  
her ferocity a shield  
against a hostile world.  
If she raged at strangers  
who intruded on our dingy room  
we were comforted. We saw  
her rage knew no fear  
that our den was inviolate.  
It didn't matter  
we were vermin to the world.  
For those years we were pups  
in her nest, we were secure  
her encompassing warmth  
her caresses nurtured us.  
What matter did it make  
if she avoided the day  
raided garbage cans, stealthily  
moving at night, avoiding  
dangerous mankind. Her madness  
was our security, security  
the prudent, the officious, and the sane  
had all denied to us.

Sally Harris Sange  
**The Intensive Care Nursery:  
From Maternity**

They made the sandbag fast about the foot  
then dropped him like a counterweight to hope  
into his tank. He winced once then curled, pushed  
and aimless finger up to glass for slow,  
bewildered tracings of the light. I left  
before they hooked him up with tubes stuck  
in veins and monitors that turn a deaf  
needle on a rotary drum or look  
at him with one deliberate blinking eye.  
The dream of life is sunk somewhere between  
maternity and nursery ward. I lie  
to, heaving up my side of a deep dream.  
In it, he simply sleeps beside my bed.  
He's a free agent in his own bassinet.

Larry Rubin  
**Locked Out, But Only Temporari-  
ly**

The rain puddle mirrors the branches, the sky;  
The Easter lily dies; its bulb sprouts green knobs—  
I move into a better house; the rent  
Is higher, but there are more rooms to play in.  
True, this cleverly fashioned clay may finally  
Grow a mold, but that mold already  
Grows upon my father's fallen chest.

We will mingle in our sweet decay  
And I will learn my origins at last,  
The roots I sought so desperately, the knobs  
I could not turn, though all my rent was paid.

Howard Healy  
**The 1948 Plymouth**

Big black beetle fenders,  
Cyclops eyes.  
A step-right-up rubber-  
covered running board.  
Step in behind the wheel to  
six cylinders of horses.

Ike took the oath on the radio;  
my father listened, approved.  
My mother cried once in the front seat  
as we rode at night; I don't know why.  
Lately, I have been dreaming about it.  
I see it pulled over by the interstate,  
the hood up, a white cloth flying.  
My father is standing beside it  
as I drive by. His eyes tell me  
I cannot stop.  
I cannot stop.

Sally Harris Sange  
**The Intensive Care Nursery:  
The Waiting**

That emptiness has content of regret  
in which womb colors dim and I just wait  
for her to come, just breathe, just incubate.  
I wish for her that she may soon forget  
the untaut belly, the empty bassinet  
beside her bed. I feel my life grow late.  
The late shift make their rounds and separate  
the dying from the lost. Before they set  
my thermostat, I show them how I flare  
up and kick within my moorings. I am worth  
the coming, the following through. While nurses stare  
down into my canopy, on a laboring North  
Wing, one woman waits in open air  
drifting, alone, for life to follow birth.

deed, due to Brown's challenging presentation, Gustavo's melody lingers on days after one has closed the book.

Robert L. Cohn's *The Shape of Sacred Space: Four Biblical Studies* (Scholars Press, \$9.95, 86 pp.) offers literary and comparative approaches to interesting aspects of biblical space (wilderness, mountains, centers), and so balances the usual emphasis on biblical time. It avoids the technicalities of redaction-historians and philologists, giving the reader interested in the received text a stimulating view of the Hebrew Bible's sense of place (and also some deep background for the contemporary question of Zionism).

Denise Lardner Carmody's *The Oldest God: Archaic Religion Yesterday and Today* (Abingdon, \$6.95, 192 pp.) is my surrender to nepotism, but also a lucid treatment of how the archaic mind at one with nature showed itself in prehistoric times, changed with civilization, persevered in the world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Islam), and is with us yet, perhaps offering some medicines for our ecological ills. In-house criticism gave me great familiarity with it but has yet to breed the least bit of contempt.

Joan Meyer Anzia's and Mary G. Durkin's *Marital Intimacy: A Catholic Perspective* (Andrews and McMeel, \$6.95, 81 pp.) is a heartwarming sketch of the course our marriages tend to run: from early romance, through predictable flattenings and even crises, to a mature sense of adventure, of making a love story. The authors weave contributions of a two-year colloquium on this topic into a sketch that is humorous, hopeful, informed by analogues in biblical faith, eminently sane, and very persuasive that sexual love is a wonderful gift from God.

## David Toolan

FATHER DAVID TOOLAN, S.J., is assistant editor of *Commonweal*.

**S**INCE I spent the summer of 1975 in India, that country's polymorphous perversity had stuck in my intestines; I could neither fully digest it nor spit it out. So for me the big literary event of the past summer was Salmon

Rushdie's Chaplinesque novel of post-independence India, *Midnight's Children* (Knopf, \$15.95, 446 pp.). It sent me somersaulting with delight, gave all that teeming energy faces I could rage and weep and laugh with; turned myth of "eternal return" into tragi-comic historical odyssey—and most surprising bonus of all, more than any American book I've read lately, Rushdie's India figured (or was it nosed?) what *this* Western Catholic's experience of the world feels like right now. In remythologizing disenchanting Bombay—and so much else—without domesticating the energy there one whit, Rushdie somehow worked the same metamorphosis on my New York, and indeed on any Western city. Shiva's power to destroy lies in the hands of a first rank artist here. In fact, the creative energies Rushdie has harnessed in this homage to his native soul-soil are enough to make any Western author weep with envy for not having such riotous material as he does to feed on—and believe me, this is a full meal. I am not recommending this gift from the East for consumers

of the exotic—but rather as a luminous "discernment of spirits" that offers one figure after another for understanding not simply another culture, but the pluralistic world in front of our noses. Rushdie's bodies are broken for us.

And if in a philosophic vein you want to understand why figures such as Rushdie's matter so much, how they constitute, contain, and expand the worlds we dwell in—and as Paul Riceour says, "give rise to thought"—then I recommend George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (University of Chicago, \$13.95, 242 pp.) Fundamentally, say the authors, the mind's business is poetic—and (my gloss) the most revolutionary things around, as the Kremlin knows, are new metaphors and the people who make them.

The subject of disturbing images, of course, brings to mind two novels in different ways about memory, Milan Kundera's episodic nightmare mime of Czechoslovakia, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, (Knopf, \$12.95, 228

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pp.) where forgetting makes the laughter ring hollow, the sex equally; and D. M. Thomas's *The White Hotel* (Viking, \$12.95, 274 pp.), till the last chapters a dismantling spoof of master-mind "realist" Sigmund Freud. The analytic technique of anamnesis is no match for a lady whose hysterical symptoms and sexual fantasies are prophetic, overdetermined not by the past so much as by the future. It all seems surreal sport, the error of no consequence, until the future, at Babi Yar, comes down.

Have you lost a parent this year? If so, David Plante's *The Country* (Atheneum, \$9.95, 159 pp.) may be the novel—or the meditation—for you. "Labour well the minute particulars," says Blake, and stripped down to the bare tendons of a family's bonds to each other, Plante does—and what emerges between the lines, the awkward silences between Mère and Père and seven sons of this French-Canadian family in Providence, Rhode Island, is—*is metaphysical country*, death's country where the narrating son Daniel cannot pray in English, but seeks to decipher the tongue of his grandparents, a French fur trader and Blackfoot Indian. A moving book, it is well matched with Arthur Kornhaber's and Kenneth L. Woodward's *Grandparents/Grandchildren: The Vital Connection* (Doubleday Anchor, \$11.95, 279 pp.), a timely reminder that the social planners' dissociated "Aged" are no substitute for the wisdom that goes on

between grandchildren and grandparents.

Of mixed quality are three books from a ground-breaking field of psychological research, Leslie Feher's *The Psychology of Birth* (Continuum, \$12.95, 224 pp.), the best of the lot; Thomas Verny with John Kelly, *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child* (Summit, \$12.95, 253 pp.), and Leni Schwartz's "how to" book, *The World of the Unborn* (Marek, \$12.95, 309 pp.). The theme here is that our first experience of death comes with birth, and that most of adult life consists perversely in replaying what namelessly, organically, we did or did not learn *in utero* and during birth until we get rebirth right. If even some of this be true, twice-born talk finds a biological basis, and vice versa.

Finally, irresistibly, though I've always been one of those who found Karl Barth's footnotes the only readable thing in him, the subtext of the man's life, revealed in *Karl Barth Letters, 1961-1968* (Eerdmans, \$14.95, 382 pp.) proved even better than the fine print, especially those letters to Pope Paul VI and Hans Küng. This is Barth, the cheerful grandfather, talking straight to the heart, to us unborn.

## Robert Lekachman

ROBERT LEKACHMAN teaches economics at the Lehman College campus of the City University of New York. Early next year, Pantheon will publish his new book, *Greed Is Not Enough: The Short, Unhappy Life of Reaganomics*.

**I**T MAY say something about the condition of the dismal science that the three most interesting economic items I have recently encountered are, in order, artifacts of a social science autodidact, an enraged anthropologist, and a disaffected, though properly authenticated, economist.

George Gilder's *Wealth and Poverty* (Basic Books \$16.95, 306 pp.) has sold over 135,000 copies in hardcover, a figure I cite with envy. David Stockman has proclaimed it "promethean in its vision" and President Reagan has plugged the book like any other product on national

television. Gilder is the rich man's Jerry Falwell. The good Jerry delivers the good news of potential enrichment in no-nonsense terms: "Put Jesus first in your stewardship and allow Him to bless you financially." A certified Harvard intellectual, Gilder has masticated heavy texts by supply side economists, Jensenite partisans of genetic predestination, and neoconservative political scientists, sociobiologists, and sociologists. He has distilled their message into the happy news that if only the poverty of the poor is allowed to spur them into activity, and further enrichment of the opulent is permitted to swell saving, investment, and prodigies of entrepreneurship, America will be great again. Thus far the domestic program of the Reagan administration has faithfully pursued Gilder's road to affluence.

In his just published *America Now: Why Nothing Works* (Simon & Schuster, \$12.95, 208 pp.) the distinguished Columbia anthropologist Marvin Harris explains numerous, depressing phenomena by a single, economic cause. The phenomena embrace declining growth and product quality, exploding crime rates, worker alienation, feminine rebellion, gay liberation, and resurgence of kooky religion. The cause, sufficient for Harris, is the transformation of work, the shift celebrated by Daniel Bell and deplored by Harris from blue- to white- and pink-collar jobs. In Harris's telling, post-industrial society alienates the office slaves as completely as ever did factory assembly lines. Alienation translates into inefficiency, mass entry of women into labor markets in order to preserve family living standards, transformation of our society from a pro- to an anti-natal attitude, acceptance of gays as semi-legitimate once sex is separated from procreation, and creation of a permanent black underclass which pursues crime on rational grounds as the most lucrative of career opportunities.

Lester Thurow, of MIT and *Newsweek*, is the straight economist. His *The Zero-Sum Society* (Basic Books \$12.95, 230 pp.) is a sophisticated exposition of the proposition that once growth stalls, one group's gain inevitably is another's loss. More for the golden agers implies

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less for young families. Men gain at women's expense. Adult workers jostle teenagers. When the sunbelt prospers, the snowbelt declines, and so on. Thurow's remedies combine free market solutions with proposals for full employment and redistribution of income and wealth which in tandem interestingly reveal the troubles of well-trained economists who also embrace social democracy.

I do not wish to be misinterpreted. These are volumes of widely differing quality. Gilder's farrago of racism, sexism, and social Darwinism, occasionally eloquent though it is, mostly should be noted as a cultural and political phenomenon. Harris's polemic proceeds too often by flat statement to be utterly convincing, but the argument is powerful enough all the same to be disquieting. Thurow's paradigm, out of game theory, of the zero-sum society is unfortunately, intuitively most persuasive of all. Evidently we must wait until 1982 for a route map to the New Jerusalem.

## Donald Senior

FATHER DONALD SENIOR, C.P., is associate professor of New Testament Studies at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. His latest book is *A Commentary on the Letters of Peter (The New Testament Message Series, Michael Glazier, Inc.)*

**I** HOPE I won't sound suspiciously pious, or, worse yet, dull if my favorite books of the past year are all religious ones. I have gobbled up some other good books this year but these are the ones whose flavor lingers and they all happen to be in the general area of christology.

Two scholarly works impressed me deeply: Edward Schillebeeckx's *The Christ: The Experience of Jesus as Lord* (Seabury, \$29.50, 925 pages) and James Dunn's, *Christology in the Making* (Westminster, paper \$24.50, 443 pp.). Schillebeeckx's book is a sequel to his acclaimed *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology* which broke into the English-speaking world (and got a left-handed salute from the Vatican) a couple of years

ago. All the fanfare for that first volume may have made the appearance of the *Christ* volume anti-climactic. But it, too, is a monumental book worthy of praise. For me it was a joy to see the craftsmanship of Schillebeeckx as he constructed a renewed theology of grace from a fresh reading of the biblical data.

Dunn's book attempts to trace the origin and evolution of the New Testament doctrine of incarnation. His thesis is that a full-blown doctrine of pre-existence and incarnation is found only in the Johannine literature, although the momentum toward that intuition can be detected in Paul and in the Wisdom speculation of the earliest community. I found this a remarkable book not only because of its provocative thesis but because it is a mint piece of clarity and responsible scholarship.

Another fine book is *Contemporary Christologies: A Jewish Response* (Paulist, paper, \$7.95, 203 pp.) by Eugene Borowitz, a Reform Jewish scholar who faces head-on the "scan-

dal" (literally, "the stumbling block") of Jesus Christ for the Jewish-Christian dialogue. He reviews eleven modern christologies, dialoguing forthrightly with each of them. The content and spirit of this book made me think—about my claims for Christ and my attitude to the living reality of Judaism.

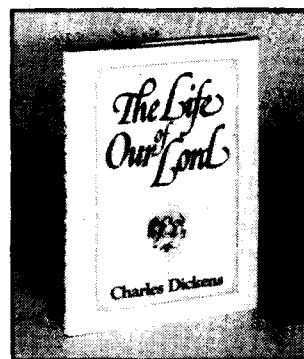
My horizon was also stretched by a collection of studies from the Woodstock Center, edited by Thomas E. Clarke under the title, *Above Every Name: The Lordship of Christ and Social Systems* (Paulist, paper, \$7.95, 308 pp.). The pastoral relevance of any christology is a litmus test for its validity, it seems to me. In these times and this political climate, I'm grateful to any thoughtful Christians who are willing to share their ideas on how our acclamation of Christ as Lord relates to the other "Lords" who rule our life, such as the National State, or the National Defense, or the Gross National Product. That's why I appreciated this book.

My final favorite is quieter, less am-

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bitious than of the others: Segundo Galilea's, *Following Jesus* (Orbis, paper, \$4.95, 122 pp.). Galilea is a Chilean priest, a very popular author in his own country but, until now, unknown here. The book originated from retreat conferences and the pages retain a meditative, non-technical aura. However, Galilea does not offer mere sweetness and light. The spirituality he suggests is alert to the cause of justice and liberation.

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## Nancy Amidei

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NANCY AMIDEI, formerly deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, is the director of Food Research Action Center in Washington.

Last Christmas I received two books as presents; this year I plan to give them as presents (already have, in fact, not being able to wait for Christmas). They are Vera Brittain's autobiographical *Testament of Youth*, and *Testament of Experience*. (\$7.95, Windview Books; 661 and 480 pp. respectively.) Not only were they good reading, I think differently for having read them. Images from the books have haunted me all year.

Brittain grew up in Victorian England, surrounded by people whose notion of her future consisted almost entirely of making a good marriage. To her credit, she wanted to think, to learn, and most of all—to write. The event that shaped her life and the lives of everyone she knew was war: that “war to end all wars” which claimed an entire generation of young men from every corner of Europe.

At its start, Vera had her first wish in the making: she was a student at Somerville College, Oxford. The war was largely distant, a romantic adventure for

the men. She was never entirely removed from it though, because her brother went early, as did others they both loved. Through their letters—and they were remarkably prolific writers for the circumstances—she had a more immediate sense of the war than some. And before long she became restless to play a part herself. After much argument, and threats from her university tutors that she would never be allowed back, Brittain began training as a nurse. She served throughout the war as a nurse: near the battlefield in France, in Malta, near London.

Throughout the war she fought her own private battles as well. More than once she was called home to “nurse” her mother (who suffered from an inability to keep a maid) and then was forced to begin nurse training all over again, as punishment for having responded to familial responsibilities. During the course of the war she lost many whom she loved, and lost as well the romantic idealism she'd felt towards war.

Eventually she rejoined a British society that was drastically changed, to finish her university education and become the writer she was still determined to be. The first book takes us through her early career as a writer, and up to her marriage in 1925. The second book ends in 1950, by which time she'd had two children and survived a second World War.

Three things make the books special. Brittain is exceptionally good at recreating her own state of mind along the way. I never had the sense of getting an after-the-fact, adult version of some youthful passion but a clear, unfiltered original of what she must have thought and felt. Because of this ability, we are able to experience with her the intellectual shift from wartime romantic, to fully committed pacifist. Second, she was a woman carving out a new way of life for herself and women like her, often by sheer force of personality. Finally, reading her books in their recent reedition, the reader has a sense of continuity about the rule Brittain chose to play and to some degree continues to play: her daughter is Shirley Williams, member of the last Labor government and a leader of England's new Social Democratic party.

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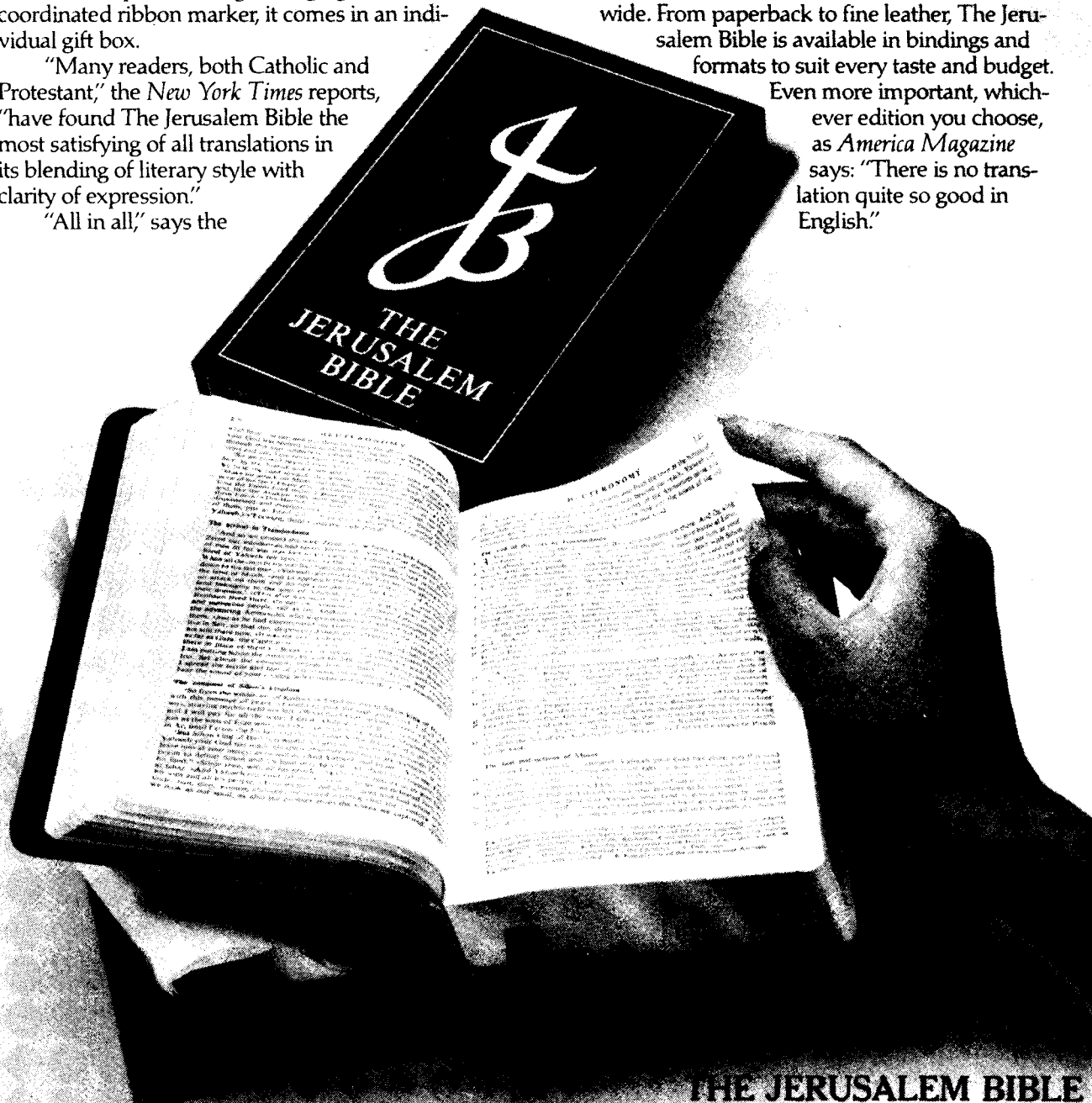
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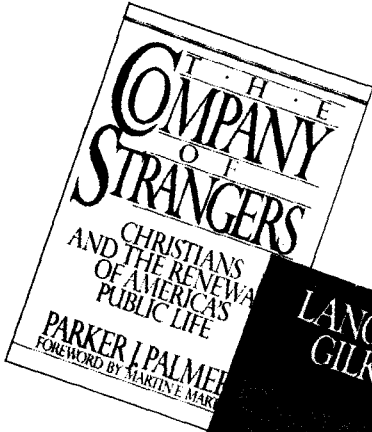
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